
"I AM A PERFECT GLUTTON OF BOOKS"
Leigh Hunt
· E · HARRIS ·

Wm H. Wade-Gery.
Bodaioch Hall
Trefeglwys

GESTA ROMANORUM:

OR,

ENTERTAINING
MORAL STORIES;

INVENTED BY THE MONKS AS A FIRE-SIDE RECREATION; AND COMMONLY APPLIED IN THEIR DISCOURSES FROM THE PULPIT: WHENCE THE MOST CELEBRATED OF OUR OWN POETS AND OTHERS, FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES, HAVE EXTRACTED THEIR PLOTS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN,

WITH

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS AND COPIOUS NOTES,

BY THE REV. CHARLES SWAN,

LATE OF CATHARINE HALL, CAMBRIDGE.

" They " [the Monks] " might be disposed occasionally to recreate their minds with subjects of a light and amusing nature; and what could be more innocent or delightful than the stories of the GESTA ROMANORUM ?"

DOUCE'S *Illustrations of Shakspeare.*

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE

LORD VISCOUNT PALMERSTON,

SECRETARY AT WAR,

AND

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE,

&c. &c. &c.

MY LORD,

WHEN the high and the honored —the gifted in mind, not less than exalted in station, derive pleasure from protecting the interests of Literature, well may she be proud of the support.

Such patronage is most valuable: like Mercy,

"it is twice blessed;
It blesseth him that *gives*, and him that *takes*:"

and powerfully elicits the feeling of unqualified respect, with which, in presenting these Volumes, I have the honor to subscribe myself,

Your Lordship's most obedient,

humble servant,

CHARLES SWAN.

London, June 9, 1824.

CONTENTS

TO

VOL. I.

CONTENTS.

CONTENTS.

CONTENTS.

ERRATA TO VOL. I.

Page xxxix, line 9, *Asiatics*. After this word insert a reference to the note at the bottom of the page.

Page 18, line 9, dele *ought*.

Page 30, line 13, for *obliged me to refuse it* read *obliged me* NOT *to refuse it*.

Page 89, line 14, for *and laboring* read *laboring*, &c.

INTRODUCTION.

SECTION I.

The History of Romantic Fabling is enveloped in much perplexity; nor is it diminished by the various conjectures which have been started and upheld. The labours of ingenuity are not always convincing; and perhaps the very fact of their plausibility leads us to mistrust. Discussion upon remote history is ever attended with difficulty; and arguments that rest upon the basis of refined deduction—that are artfully designed to pull down one system while they support another equally imaginative, may have a well-founded

claim to admiration, but not upon the score of truth. It is singular how the mind loves to grasp at mystery, and to disport itself in the chaos of departed time. It springs undauntedly forward, unappalled by the numberless shadows which flit in "dim perspective" before it, and undeterred by the intricacies of the way. It would seem like a captive escaped from confinement, wantoning in the excess of unaccustomed liberty. And the more boundless the subject, the less timid we find the adventurer; the more perilous the journey, the less wary are his movements. Boldness appears to constitute success; as if, because the faint heart never attained the fair lady, modest pretensions, and unassuming merit, never secured the lady TRUTH. It is a libel upon the head and the heart; and cannot be too speedily abandoned.

Of the theories already advanced, none, it

seems to me, is perfect; and none, without some portion of accuracy. They each go part of the way, but stop before they touch the mark. Bishop Percy, after Mallet, attributes the invention of romance to the ancient Scalds or Bards of the North. "They believed the existence of giants and dwarfs; they entertained opinions not unlike the more modern notion of fairies; they were strongly possessed with the belief of spells and enchantments, and were fond of inventing combats with dragons and monsters[1]." Now this is unequivocally nothing less than the entire machinery employed in all the Arabian Tales, and in every other oriental fiction. Such a coincidence no one will suppose the result of accident; nor can it for a moment be believed, that the warm imaginations of the East—where

1 Reliques of Ancient Eng. Poetry, Vol. 3. p. xiii.

Nature brightens the fancy equally with the flowers—borrowed it from the colder conceptions of the Northern bards. Many parts of the Old Testament, demonstrate familiarity with spells; and Solomon (which proves a *traditional* intercourse, at least, between the Jews and other people of the East) by universal consent, has been enthroned sovereign of the Genii, and lord of the powerful Talisman. In David and Goliah, we trace the contests of knights with giants: in the adventures of Sampson, perhaps, the miraculous feats attributed to the heroes of chivalry. In the apocryphal book of Tobit, we have an angel in the room of a SAINT; enchantments, antidotes, distressed damsels, demons, and most of the other machinery of the occidental romance [1]. Parts of the Pentateuch; of Kings,

1 In the *application* of the 10th Tale, Vol. 1, the book of Tobit, is referred to.

&c. &c. appear to have been amplified, and rendered wild and fabulous; and were the comparison carried minutely forward, I am persuaded that the analogy would be found as striking as distinct. I mean not that this has always been the *immediate* source: I am rather inclined to suppose, that certain ramifications, *direct* from the East, already dilated and improved, were more generally the origin. But Scripture, in many cases, furnished a supernatural agency without pursuing this circuitous route; as well as heroes with all the attributes of ancient romance. In the old French prose of Sir Otuel, Chap. XXIV. we have the following exclamations on the death of the knight Roland, which partly confirm my observation. "Comparé à *Judas Machabeus* par ta valeur et prouesse; ressemblant à *Sanson*, et pareil à *Jonatas fils de Saul* par la fortune de sa triste morte!" The Jewish Tal-

mud, and especially the commentary upon it, abound with fables, composed in some respects of the materials worked up by the Scalds, but long anterior in date to their compositions, so far as they are known.

Dr. Percy contends, that "old writers of chivalry appear utterly unacquainted with whatever relates to the Mahometan nations, and represent them as worshipping *idols*, or adoring a golden image of Mahomet[1]." This, I should conceive, would naturally be the case. It was the aim of Christian writers to represent the infidels in the worst light possible. They thought them the most wretched beings in creation; and they might, therefore, artfully pervert their creed, and exaggerate their vices. Most frequently, such would be the genuine result of their abhorrence:—just

1 Rel. of A. E. Poetry, *Ibid.*

as popular superstition pictures the "foul fiend," with horns, and cloven feet, and a hideously distorted countenance—not because it is really accredited, but because nothing is thought too vile or too fearful for the Evil One. The hostility which the crusades excited and nourished; nay, the very difference of religious feeling, would necessarily call out the whole virulence of an age, not remarkable for its forbearance; and it is absurd to suppose, that the intercourse so long maintained between the two continents (both previous to these expeditions, and subsequent), should not have given them a sufficient acquaintance with the Saracen belief, and mode of worship. If the great Saladin required and received *knight-hood* from the hands of the Christians [1], it argued a degree of intimacy

1 See "Gesta Dei per Francos," page 1152. Joinville (p. 42) is cited by Gibbon for a similar instance.

with European customs on the one side, which it would be unfair and arbitrary to deny the other.

That the Scalds added some circumstances to the original matter, and rejected others, is extremely probable. The traditions which conveyed the fable, would, of course, be corrupted; not only from the mode of conveying it, but from the dissimilarity of customs and ideas among those by whom it was received. All I contend for, is the original ground, upon which they, and other nations have built; and this, I think I shall be able to demonstrate, purely oriental. But it is objected, that if the northern bards had derived their systems from the East, they would have naturalized them as the Romans did the stories of Greece. It is thought that they must have adopted into their religious rites the same mythology, and have evinced as strong a simili-

tude, as the nations of classical celebrity. There is, in truth, no basis for such an assertion to stand upon. The long intercourse between these nations, their vicinity to each other, and more than all, the original similarity of their worship, *prepared* the Romans to receive the devotional system of a conquered country, without hesitation. They understood, and valued Grecian literature, and consequently found an additional motive for the reception of Grecian theology. It accorded with preconceived notions ; it was, in fact, a *part* of their own. Besides, the Romans were rising in civilization, and caught at every shadow of improvement. The people of the North were totally the reverse. They were the children of Nature—of Nature yet unbetrothed to Art. *They* were not, therefore, prepared by any thing analogous to produce a similar effect : and could but seize the most promi-

nent features that were presented to them, upon which to engraft their own wild and terrible stories.

Warton has written a long dissertation to prove that the Arabians, who had been for some time seated on the northern coasts of Africa, and who entered Spain about the beginning of the eighth century, "disseminated those extravagant inventions which were so peculiar to their romantic and creative genius [1]." This hypothesis Bishop Percy has endeavoured to refute; and, according to Mr. Ellis [2], he has entirely succeeded. The argument advanced on this occasion is, that were it true, "the first French romances of chivalry would have been on Moorish, or at least Spanish subjects, whereas the most ancient stories of this kind, whether in prose or verse, whether in Italian, French,

1 Hist. of Eng. Poetry, Diss. 1.

2 Specimens of Anc. Met. Romances, Vol. i. p. 31.

English, &c. are *chiefly* on the subjects of Charlemagne and the Paladins, or of our British Arthur, and his Knights of the Round Table, &c. being evidently borrowed from the fabulous chronicles of the supposed Archbishop Turpin, and of Jeffery of Monmouth [1]." Something in this there may be; but it is still clear, that intercourse, of whatever kind, existing between two nations, must, to a certain degree, supply information relative to their peculiar habits and belief. That each side would hold communication with their captives, either from political motives, or otherwise, is consistent with the experience of all ages; and, surely, not every individual would be so fastidious as to repel a closer intimacy. Courtesy, humanity, intrigue, &c. would, in some few at least, open a door to an

1 Rel. of Anc. E. Poetry, Vol. 3. p. xii. *Note.*

unfettered interchange of thought; while gratitude for certain benefits might operate on others. In the course of a multifarious warfare, such things *must* occur; the line of separation *must* occasionally be removed, and youthful hearts and minds, *must, now and then,* however sundered by human prejudices, break down the strongest barrier that interposes between them. If this be granted, when the history of such times and such circumstances was forgotten, the literature which they had helped to disseminate, would remain. The legendary tale of the sire descends unmutilated to the son; and the fact is on record, though the occasion be obliterated. The fabulous chronicle of Turpin might *thén* be drawn up; having its superstructure on French manners, but its basis on oriental learning. Much time must inevitably elapse before new systems can take root; and when they do, it

is imperceptibly and silently. Hence, may the hostile incursions of the Saracens have introduced *some* portion of Eastern fiction: but not *all*; for it is the common tendency of a conquered country to engraft its *own* character and customs upon those of the stronger power.

It has been observed by Ritson (whose virulent and ungentlemanly abuse of his opponents is disgusting in the extreme!) that neither the Spaniards, nor any other nations of Europe, had an opportunity of adopting literary information "from a people with whom they had no connection, but as enemies, *whose language they never understood, and whose manners they detested;* nor would even have condescended or permitted themselves, to make such an adoption from a set of infidel barbarians who had invaded, ravaged, and possessed themselves of some of the best and

richest provinces of Spain[1]." Much of this is in substance what has been contended against above; and that a very short period of servitude will not open the sources of a more friendly communication—in appearance at least—between nations under such circumstances, is contrary to historical fact, and to human nature. The enslaved must look up to the enslaver for protection—for support; and the latter in return would enforce, under the penalty of extermination, the aid which was considered requisite. Thus, however involuntary and hateful, intercourse must be under *all* situations. But here, the fact is, as Mr. Warton remarks, (though Ritson pleases to overlook it) that after the irruption of the Saracens, the Spaniards neglected even the study of the Sacred Writings, for the express

1 Dissert. on Romance, and Minstrelsy, Vol. i. p. xx. xxi.

purpose of acquiring the Arabic. This curious passage is cited by Du Cange, whose words I shall quote at length.

"Quòd vero suprà laudatus Scriptor anonymus de Galliæ nostræ in Lingua Latina barbarie ante Caroli M. tempora, idem de Hispania post Saracenorum irruptionem testatur Alvarus: ubi neglectis et posthabitis Scripturis Sanctis, earumque sacris interpretibus, quotquot supererant Christiani, Arabum Chaldæorumque libris evolvendis incumbebant, *gentilitia eruditione præclari, Arabico eloquio sublimati, Ecclesiasticam pulchritudinem ignorantes, et Ecclesiæ flumina de Paradiso manantia, quasi vilissima contemnentes, legem suam nesciebant, et linguam propriam non advertebant Latini, ita ut ex omni Christi Collegio vix inveniretur unus in milleno hominum genere, qui salutatorias fratri posset rationaliter dirigere literas,* CUM REPERIRENTUR ABSQUE NU-

MERO MULTIPLICES TURBÆ, QUI ERUDITE CHALDAICAS VERBORUM EXPLICARENT POMPAS. Quod quidem abunde firmat; quæ de Elepanto Toletano suprà diximus. Sed et inde satis arguimus unde tot voces Arabicæ in Hispanam, subinde sese intulerunt[1]."

We have then a complete refutation of Ritson's strongest objection; and perhaps had not the spleen of the writer been more powerful than the good sense and feeling of the man, he never would have hazarded the remark. And if judicial astrology, medicine, and chemistry, were of Arabian origin, and introduced into Europe a century at least before the crusades: if Pope Gerbert, or Sylvester II. who died A.D. 1003, brought the Arabic numerals into France, it is surely reasonable to suppose that these sciences, so

1 Du Cange; Gloss. Med. Inf. Lat. Tom. I. Præfatio, p. xxxii. § 31.

intimately connected with magical operations (and with fictions diverging from them) as to confer upon the possessor a title to supernatural agency, would extend their influence to the legendary stories, as well as to the manners of the west, which these very stories are admitted to describe! Yet, after all, it is not to be imagined that the introduction of eastern invention happened at one time, or in one age; it was rather the growth of many times, and of many ages—continually, though gradually augmenting, till it attained maturity.

The next hypothesis gives Armorica, or Bretany, as the source of romantic fiction. But to this, the same objections arise that have been started with respect to the rest. Mr. Ellis, in the introduction to his "Specimens of Early English Romances," plausibly suggests that all are compatible. He

imagines "that the scenes and characters of our romantic histories were very generally, though not exclusively, derived from the Bretons, or from the Welsh of this island; that much of the colouring, and perhaps some particular adventures, may be of Scandinavian origin, and that occasional episodes, together with part of the machinery, may have been borrowed from the Arabians [1]." Which is as much as to say, that each nation contributed *something*, and very likely they did; but which furnished the greater part, or which originated the whole, is just as obscure as before a "reconciliation" of opinions was projected. This conciliatory system will remind the reader of Boccacio's tale of *The Three Rings*, "the question of which is yet remaining."

Another supposition attributes the chief source of romantic fiction to classical and

1 Vol. I. p. 35.

mythological authors; that is, to the stories of Greece and Rome, somewhat altered by modern usages. To this belief Mr. Southey[1] and Mr. Dunlop seem to incline. The latter adds, that "after all, a great proportion of the wonders of romance must be attributed to the imagination of the authors." But when these wonders, similarly constructed, pervade the most remote countries, there must be something more than an author's imagination brought into the account. Consideration, however, is due to the idea of a classical origin; and this, blended with the rest, may help to make up a perfect system. Before I proceed to the attempt, I would advert to certain observations which Mr. Dunlop has promulgated in his "History of Fiction." He says, "It cannot be denied, and indeed has been acknowledged by Mr. Warton, *that*

1 Introduction to Amadis of Gaul.

the fictions of the Arabians and Scalds are totally different [1]." Much misunderstanding would doubtless be avoided by accurate references: and if Mr. Dunlop be correct in what he asserts, it would be a pleasant thing to know the edition and page to which he alludes. In contradiction to the insinuation here thrown out, Warton says, "But as the *resemblance which the pagan Scandinavians bore to the eastern nations in manners, monuments, opinions, and practices,* IS SO VERY PERCEPTIBLE AND APPARENT, an inference arises, that their migration from the east, must have happened at a period by many ages more recent, and therefore, most probably about the time specified by historians [2]." And again, "These practices and opinions co-operated with kindred superstitions of *dragons, dwarfs, fairies, giants, and enchanters, which the tradi-*

1 Page 163. 2 Dissertation I. p. xxviii.

tions of the gothic Scalders had already planted; and produced that extraordinary species of composition which has been called ROMANCE[1]." In another place, indeed, he admits that there were "*but few*" of these monsters in the poetry of the most ancient Scalds; but that few is quite sufficient for the argument.

So that, one would think, Warton supplies no testimony in support of a doctrine, which I cannot help fancying may be proved altogether groundless. "Allowing the early Scaldic odes to be genuine," says Mr. Dunlop, "we find in them no *dragons, giants, magic rings, or enchanted castles.* These are only to be met with in the compositions of the bards who flourished after the native vein of Runic fabling had been enriched by the tales of the Arabians[2]." This is an extremely

1 Hist. of Eng. Poetry, Vol. I. p. 110. 2 Vol. I p. 164.

cautious method of writing; for while we contend that the easterns furnished the groundwork, and fix the date, Mr. Dunlop may tell us, be it when it may, that it was subsequent to the period in which the Runic fable flourished in its native purity. Let us examine, however, how far his bold assertion may be maintained, respecting the poetical machinery adopted by the ancient Scalds. Let us revert to the EDDA [1], a monument "tout-à-fait unique en son espece," as Monsieur Mallet assures us [2], and try whether there be not, in fact, almost the whole of what he has rejected.

1 "The Edda was compiled, *undoubtedly* with many additions and interpolations, from fictions and traditions in the old Runic poems, by Soemund Sigfusson, surnamed the Learned, about the year 1057."—WARTON. But Warton has not proved his *undoubtedly;* and though I do not deny the probability of interpolations, I shall not relinquish the *Giants,* &c. without further proof.

2 "Monumens de la Mythol. et de la Poesie des Celtes," &c. p. 13. *Pref.*

Gylfe was king of Sweden, and a celebrated magician. When a colony of Asiatics arrived in his country (a tradition which adds strength to *my* hypothsis) he assumed the form of an old man, and journeyed to the city of Asgard. " Sed Asæ erant perspicaciores, (imo ut) præviderent iter ejus, eumque *fascinatione* oculorum exciperent. *Tunc cernebat ille altum palatium:* Tecta ejus erant tecta aureis clypeis, ut tectum novum. Ita loquitur Diodolfius: 'Tectum ex auro micante, Parietes ex lapide, Fundamina aulæ ex montibus fecere Asæ sagaciores [1].' "

Here, beyond dispute, is an *enchanted castle.* And not only so, but the common oriental

1 " But the Asiatics were more quick-sighted ; nay, they foresaw his journey, and deceived him with their enchantments. *Then he beheld a lofty palace;* its roofs were covered with golden shields, like a new roof. Thus Diodolfius speaks of it. ' The Asiatics, more skilful, made the roof of shining gold, and its walls of stone ; the foundations of the hall were mountains.' "—*Goranson's Lat. Tr. of the Edda.*

practice of putting a number of questions as the test of a person's wisdom, occurs in this very fable. "Qui est le plus ancien ou le premier des Dieux?" is first asked, and other interrogatories follow, of a similar character. Then for the GIANTS—in the Runic mythology nothing is more common. Speaking of the formation of man, the Edda observes, (I follow the French translation of M. Mallet.) "Cet homme fut appellé *Yme;* les Géans le nomment *Oergelmer*, et c'est de lui que toutes leurs familles descendent, comme cela est dit dans la *Voluspa.* 'Toutes les Prophétesses viennent de Vittolfe; les sages de Vilmôde, LES GEANS de Yme,' et dans un autre endroit: 'Des fleuves Elivages ont coulé des goutes de venim, et il souffla un vent d'où un Géant fut formé. *De lui viennent toutes les races Gigantesques*'[1]." In this place we have

1 *Mythologie Celtique.* p. 11.

*

not merely an accidental notice of giants, but their full genealogy, and a quotation from a poem still more ancient than the Edda, introduced in support of it. Afterwards mention is made of the *Dwarfs;* "Alors les Dieux s'etant assis sur leurs thrônes rendirent la justice et délibererent sur ce qui concernoit les NAINS. Cette espéce de créatures s'etoit formée dans la poudre de la terre, comme les vers naissent dans un cadavre[1]." And again of the *Fairies* and *Genii,* or beings answering to them. "Les unes sont d'origine divine, d'autres descendent des GENIES, d'autres dês Nains, comme il est dit dans ses vers: *Il y a des* FÉES *de diverse origine, quelques unes viennent des Dieux, et d'autres des* GENIES, *d'autres des Nains*[2]." This fable gives a very curious account of the fairies: "Voici," says M. Mallet, "une Théorie

1 *Mythologie Celtique,* p. 30. 2 *Ibid.* p. 36.

complette de la Féerie ;" but they are perhaps, as Bishop Percy has remarked, more analogous to the *Weird Sisters* than to the popular notion of fairyism in the *present* day. The ninth fable of the EDDA, alludes to " Les GENIES lumineux," who are said to be " plus brillans que que le soleil ; mais les *noirs* sont plus noirs que la poix[1]." And what is this but the good and bad genii of eastern romance? Thor's " vaillante ceinture, qui a le pouvoir d'accroitre ses forces," and the " chaine magique[2]," are equivalent to the *enchanted ring;* nor are " le grand serpent de Midgard," with other monsters, so unlike the oriental Dragon[3], as to preclude any comparison.

In short, the reader clearly distinguishes the accordance of the northern mythology

1 *Mythologie Celtique*, p, 40. 2 *Ibid.* p. 84 and 90.

3 The Apocryphal continuation of the book of *Esther*, and *Bel and the* DRAGON, seem to bespeak the prevalence of this fiction in the East at a very early period.

with that of the East. I could cite many more examples, but they are unnecessary; and if, as Mr. Dunlop imagines, "in the Eastern Peris we may trace the origin of European Fairies[1]," by what possible contrivance, if he will be consistent, can he deny to the fairies of the North, that claim which he grants to the *whole of* Europe?

I shall now proceed to account for the introduction of romantic fiction, by a channel which appears to me the most natural, and therefore, the most likely to be true. I would begin with that period in which the persecutions of the pagan rulers, drove the primitive Christians into the East. Full of the mysterious wonders of the Apocalypse, not less than of the miraculous records of the Holy Gospels; imbued with all that the Old Testament narrates, and probably anticipating

1 Hist. of Fiction, Vol. I. p. 165.

similar interposition from Heaven in their own persons; their minds wrought up by many causes to the highest pitch of enthusiasm, and their hearts glowing with a fervour that no other ages can boast—they were well prepared to receive the impressions naturally made upon a heated fancy; and to put credit in tales which the distress of their situation prevented them from investigating, and their ignorance or credulity debarred from doubt. Hence, with the lives of the Fathers of the Church, they interwove prodigies of another land; and being further willing to address the prejudices of those they might hope to convert, adorned their martyrologies with fictitious incidents of oriental structure—even as, to conciliate the heathen, they introduced into their religious buildings, the statues of pagan worship, dignifying them with novel names, and serving them with novel cere-

monies. Not always indeed was this the process; nor the apotheosis always intentional. Succeeding times exhibited another mode of realizing fables, if I may so speak; and discovered another path to falsehood under the garb of truth. The monks were accustomed to exercise themselves with declaiming upon the merits of their patron saint. To give a new varnish to his fame, to excite yet more powerfully either the intellects or the devotion of the drowsy brotherhood, they added romantic fictions of their own; and invented familiar stories, derived from an infinite variety of sources. But because eastern imaginations were more splendid and captivating—because Jerusalem, and the Holy Sepulchre were in the East—because "an idle and lying horde of pilgrims and palmers," (as Mr. Dunlop expresses it) annually brought thither fresh subjects for credulity to feed

upon, they were the most partial to oriental conceptions. The fables which they thus constructed were laid by, fairly transcribed, and beautifully illuminated; until, in due time, the monastery coffers were ransacked, and the gross and acknowledged inventions of earlier ascetics were imposed upon their later brethren, as the undoubted and veritable history of real fathers and real saints.

It is well known that in the earlier ages of Christianity forged gospels were put forth in imitation of the true: while the tenets of the Persian magi were united with the doctrines of the Son of God[1]. If this prove nothing further, it proves the facility with which oriental dogmas were interwoven with those of the west. At a more advanced period, other legends written in Latin, and professing to be narratives of what actually occurred, were again transcribed, with manifold amplifica-

1 See Mosheim's Eccles. Hist. Cent. I. and III.

tions by those into whose hands the manuscripts might happen to fall. Metrical versions were then given; and their popularity soon induced the narrators to step out of their immediate walk of martyrdom, to raise the standard of chivalry in the persons of Brute, Alexander, Charlemagne, and the rest. Let it be observed, that all these stories are of a similar cast; the *Lives of the Saints*, some how or other, are always connected with the fictions of every hero of chivalry. They invariably work marvels in behalf of their votaries; they bequeath relics of surprizing power—or they appear in dreams; or the utterance of their mighty names counteracts the potency of magical delusions, &c. &c. while the hero himself, treading in the steps of his canonized precursor, becomes a distinguished *religieux*; and at last takes *his* place in the calendar—"a very, very Saint."

If my hypothesis, therefore, be just, with the return of the exiled Christians from the East, *originated* romantic fiction in Europe. But this, of course, must be taken with modifications. Time alone could mature, what in its progress acquired such extensive popularity; and it seems to me, one of the glaring defects of other systems, that they would represent the rise of that particular kind of fable in question to have been almost instantaneous: to have followed swift upon the incursions of the Saracens—to have sprung up mysteriously among the Scandinavians, or equally, if not more so, among the Armoricans. Whereas, that which was so wide in its extent—so singular in its effects—so deeply impressed on a large portion of the globe, must inevitably have had a beginning, and a middle: it must have been long crescent, before it was at the full. It is true, the classical

ystem has not all the objections which meet the other, on the score of precipitancy; but still it accounts only for that part of romance which is evidently built upon classic ground. Much of the machinery is wholly different; and from the comparatively few allusions—from the indistinct and monstrous perversion of Grecian or Roman fable, we are sure that their knowledge was very limited. But, in fact, a union of classic traditions with oriental fiction is not only probable but certain; yet my hypothesis still traces it to the East[1].

1 The process by which Ulysses preserved himself from the charms of Circe, is very similar to that which occurs in the story of "Beder Prince of Persia, and Giahaure Princess of Samandal," in the Arabian Tales; and the fable of the Cyclops is found in the third voyage of Sinbad the Sailor. But Homer is known to have been a great wanderer, and to have picked up much traditionary matter in the East and elsewhere. Speaking of the fable of Atalanta, Warton has observed, (Diss. on the Gest. Rom. v. 3.) that "It is not impossible that an oriental apologue might have given rise to the Grecian fable." This, I am inclined to think, has often been the case.

For it will be noticed, that Eastern conceptions invariably predominate, even where the subject is confessedly classic; as in the stories of Alexander, Cæsar, and others. Besides the incursions of these leaders into that quarter of the world, might, as it has happened in similar cases, leave certain traditionary monuments of their own belief[1]. This, however, I by no means intend to urge.

When instances of those who fled, or were exiled to the East, or voluntarily settled there, are so numerous, it would be idle to weary the reader's attention, by entering into any lengthened detail. The names of Clemens of Alexandria, of Ignatius, Tertullian and Origen, are conspicuous in the second and third centuries, with many others, who were in

1 There is in the British Museum, I understand, a TURKISH MS. Poem, of which *Alexander the Great* is the hero. It is said to have been written in the 14th century, if not earlier.

constant intercourse with the West; and the soft and yielding character of these times presented a plastic surface, to every, even the slightest touch. In the early part of the fourth century the foundation of Constantinople, which drew from Italy such a large population, would facilitate the interchange of literature; for it is not improbable, that many of the Asiatics[1], driven from their settlements by the influx of the foreigners, would hasten to occupy the homes which the others had vacated. At all events, the new settlers in the East had friends and connections in their father-land, with whom it was natural, and even necessary, that there should be a certain

1 I use this term, and one or two following, with some latitude. Gibbon calls the little town of Chrysopolis, or Scutari, "*the Asiatic suburb of Constantinople:*" and the extreme approximation of the two shores; the constant and easy intercourse from, and before the time of Xerxes, &c. downward, not omitting the *Asiatic population* which has been so long naturalized there, sufficiently authorize the expression.

intercourse, Towards the conclusion of the third century, when monachism was so vehemently propagated, and the East inundated with a restless class of men, who strolled about in pursuit of proselytes (not much unlike the errant-knights of a subsequent age) the position I have laid down is more clearly evinced. It would be doing injustice to my subject, if, in speaking of this singular fact, I used other language than that of the historian of the Roman empire. "The progress of the monks," says this philosophic writer, "was not less rapid, or universal, than that of Christianity itself. Every province, and at last, every city of the empire, was filled with their increasing multitudes; and the bleak and barren isles, from Lerins to Lipari, that arise out of the Tuscan sea, were chosen by the Anachorets, for the place of their voluntary exile. An easy and perpetual intercourse by sea and

land connected the provinces of the Roman world; and the life of Hilarion displays the facility with which an indigent hermit of Palestine, might *traverse Egypt, embark for Sicily, escape to Epirus, and finally settle in the island of Cyprus.* The Latin Christians embraced the religious institutions of Rome. The pilgrims, who visited Jerusalem, eagerly copied, in the most *distant climes of the earth,* the faithful model of monastic life. *The disciples of Antony spread themselves beyond the tropic, over the Christian empire of Œthiopia*[1]. The monastery of Banchor[2], in Flintshire, which contained above two thousand brethren, dispersed a numerous colony among the barbarians of Ireland; and Iona, one of the Hebrides, which was planted by the Irish monks,

1 See Jerom. (tom. i. p. 126); Assemanni, (Bibliot. Orient. tom. iv. p. 92. p. 857—919) and Geddes's Church Hist. of Œthiopia, p. 29, 30, 31.

2 Camden's Britannia, Vol. i. p. 666, 667.

diffused over the northern regions a doubtful ray of *science and superstition*[1]."

The roving character of the monks, therefore, is another link of the chain by which I introduce oriental fiction into the West; and it is utterly impossible, (maturely weighing the habits and propensities of this class of people), that they should not have picked up and retained the floating traditions of the countries through which they passed. "Some of the early romances," says Mr. Walker[2], "as well as the legends of saints, were *undoubtedly* fabricated in the deep silence of the cloister. Both frequently sprung from the warmth of fancy, which religious seclusion is so well calculated to nourish; but the former were adorned with *foreign embellishments*." It is ex-

1 Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, Vol. 6. p. 245, 6, Ed. 1811.

2 "Essay on the Origin of Romantic Fabling in Ireland," p. 4.—4to.

actly on this footing, (though I certainly include the *latter*—that is, the legends of the saints, in the idea of foreign embellishment!) that I would place the hypothesis I have advanced; and here Mr. Walker's opinion, that Ireland is indebted to Italy for some of her fictions, derived originally from the East, will find confirmation. They might, at the same time, have been received, by way of ENGLAND, and as history testifies the fact of a colony of monks from thence, taking root in Ireland, the notion is more than probable. But in either case, the *original* is the same. As further corroborative I may add, that in the ninth century, Crete and Sicily were invaded and conquered by the Arabs; who likewise entered Italy, and almost approached Rome.

I need scarcely allude to the crusades as sources of romantic fabling. They are undisputed parts of the system; and probably, at

the termination of the third expedition, toward the close of the twelfth century, this kind of writing was at its height. Chivalry was then followed with a steady devotion, which I am inclined to think, soon afterwards abated; and was rather the undulation of the water, succeeding the tempest, than the tempest itself. The fourth and fifth crusade followed at the distance of about twenty years; but upwards of thirty elapsed before the sixth and last. The blood and coin that had been so uselessly lavished, might well conduce to satisfy the most enthusiastic crusader, and stem the torrent of popular superstition: while the surprizing frenzy that had so long desolated both hemispheres, from its very intensity, was calculated to subside, and introduce a juster mode of thinking, and more rational ideas. Time, which allays all other passions, could not but temper this; and the last of these

frantic expeditions appears, to my imagination, the desperate effort of expiring fanaticism—the last violent struggle of religious persecution in the East. With the decline of chivalry, the fictions, which principally attained their celebrity during its zenith, (because they had become incorporated with it; though originally independent and extraneous,) would naturally cease to be regarded; and the extravagant conceptions which this institution cherished, would, when good sense resumed, or assumed her proper place, necessarily fall into decay.

SECTION II.

I now hasten to the GESTA ROMANORUM; and purpose giving a brief outline of its history, with a notice of certain stories, which,

without reference to their own individual merit, have been raised into higher importance by furnishing the groundwork of many popular dramas. I shall also take occasion to offer a few remarks upon the translation now before the public, elucidatory of certain points which seem to require explanation.

The Gesta Romanorum was one of the most applauded compilations of the middle ages. The method of instructing by fables, is a practice of remote antiquity; and has always been attended with very considerable benefit. Its great popularity encouraged the monks to adopt this medium, not only for the sake of illustrating their discourses, but of making a more durable impression upon the minds of their illiterate auditors. An abstract argument, or logical deduction, (had they been capable of supplying it,) would operate but faintly upon intellects, rendered even more

obtuse by the rude nature of their customary occupations; while, on the other hand, an apposite story, would arouse attention, and stimulate the blind and unenquiring devotion, which is so remarkably characteristic of the middle ages.

The work under consideration is compiled from old Latin chronicles of Roman, or rather, as Mr. Warton and Mr. Douce think, of GERMAN invention. But this idea, with all submission, derives little corroborative evidence from fact. There is one story, and I believe, *but* one, which gives any countenance to it. That a few are extracted from German authors, (who may not, after all, be the *inventors*) is no more proof that the compiler was a German, than that, because some stories are found in the Roman annals, the whole book was the production of a Latin writer.

Oriental, legendary, and classical fables, heightened by circumstances of a strong romantic cast, form the basis of this singular composition. But the authorities cited for classical allusions are of the lower order. Valerius Maximus, Macrobius, Aulus Gellius, Pliny, Seneca, Boethius, and occasionally OVID, are introduced; but they do not always contain the relation which they are intended to substantiate; and it is invariably much disguised and altered. The oriental apologues are sometimes from the romance of "Baarlam and Josaphat," and in several instances from a Latin work entitled, "De Clericali Disciplina," attributed to Petrus Alphonsus, a converted Jew, godson to Alphonsus I. of Arragon, after whom he was named. There is an analysis of it by Mr. Douce inserted in Mr. Ellis's Specimens of Early English Romances. According to the former of

these gentlemen, two productions bearing the title of GESTA ROMANORUM, and totally distinct from each other, exist. I confess, I see no good reason for the assertion. I take it to be the same work, with a few additions, not so considerable by any means as Mr. Douce imagines[1]. This I shall shew, by and by. Of the present performance, though it purports to relate the GESTS OF THE ROMANS, there is little that corresponds with the title. On the contrary, it comprehends "a multitude of narratives, either not historical; or in another respect, such as are totally unconnected with the Roman people, or perhaps

1 " In fact, the two Gestas may just as well be considered the same work, as the different versions of the Wise Masters, or of Kalilah u Damnah. The term Gesta Romanorum implies nothing more than a collection of ancient stories, many of which might be the same, but which would naturally vary in various countries according to the taste of the collector, in the same manner, as different stories are introduced in the Greek Syntipas, the Italian Erastus, and English Wise Masters."—DUNLOP. *Hist. of Fiction*, Vol. II. p. 170.

the most preposterous misrepresentations of their history. To cover this deviation from the promised plan, which, by introducing a more ample variety of matter, has contributed to increase the reader's entertainment, our collector has taken care to preface almost every story with the name or reign of a Roman emperor; who, at the same time, is often a monarch that never existed, and who seldom, whether real or supposititious, has any concern with the circumstances of the narrative[1]."

The influence which this work has had on English poetry, is not the least surprizing fact connected with it. Not only the earlier writers of our country—Gower, Chaucer, Lydgate, Occleve, &c. have been indebted to it, but also, as the reader will perceive in the notes, the poets of modern times. Its popu-

1 WARTON. *Dissert. on G. R.* p. vii.

larity in the reign of Queen Elizabeth is proved by many allusions in the works of that period. An anonymous comedy, published early in the following reign, and entitled "*Sir Giles Goosecap,*" observes,—"Then for your lordship's quips and quick jests, why GESTA ROMANORUM were nothing to them[1]." In Chapman's "*May-Day*[2]," a person speaking of the literary information of another character, styles him—"One that has read Marcus Aurelius, GESTA ROMANORUM, the Mirrour of Magistrates, &c.....to be led by the nose like a blind beare that has read nothing[3]!"

The author of this popular work, has been often guessed at, but nothing certain is known. Warton believes him to be Petrus Berchorius, or Pierre Bercheur, a native of Poitou; and

1 London. Printed for J. Windet, 1606.
2 Act III. p. 39. 1611. 3 WARTON.

prior of the Benedictine convent of Saint Eloi, at Paris, in the year 1362. Mr. Douce, on the other hand, contends that he is a German, because "in the Moralization to chapter 144," [Tale LXIV. of the second volume of the translated Gesta,] "there is, in most of the early editions, a German proverb; and in chapter 142," [Tale LXII. *Ibid.*] "several German names of dogs." I apprehend, however, that these names may be found more analogous to the *Saxon;* and, at all events, Warton's idea of an interpolation, is far from improbable. Mr. Douce adds, that the earliest editions of the Gesta were printed in Germany; and certainly, they often bear the *name* of some place in this country. But in the first ages of the art of printing, such might be the case, without actually indentifying the point where the impression was struck off. It is a fact, sufficiently well

known, that copies of certain books, printed in Italy, appeared, in every respect similar, and at the same time, in many parts of Germany, the Netherlands, &c. The only observable difference was in the alteration of *names* in the title-page. Now, if this be true, the *Gesta Romanorum*, printed in Italy, and thence sent for sale to some factor in distant parts, might have this person's name and residence affixed, not from any dishonest motive, but merely to announce the place in which they were to be sold. Such a supposition is not beyond the bounds of probability, and may be worth considering. Many copies will be found *without* date or place; and perhaps the inconvenience and difficulty which a new title-page created, might on some occasions induce the booksellers to omit it altogether.

English idioms and proverbial expressions

are so frequent in the *Gesta Romanorum*, that they might lead to a supposition quite the reverse of Mr. Douce's idea; but, I rather conceive them the necessary consequence of transcription; and that the manuscript was thought to require verbal flourishes, as well as gilded margins and illuminated initials. In like manner, I account for the Saxon names of dogs [Tale LXII. Vol. II.] which are quite unnecessary, and seem introduced in the most arbitrary manner. The incidents of one story [Tale LXXV. Vol. II. page 305,] are said to occur in the bishopric of Ely. "This fact," says the writer of the Gest, "related upon the faith of many to whom it was well known, *I have myself heard*, both from the inhabitants of the place and others." The inference, therefore is, that the narrator was either an Englishman, or one well acquainted with the localities of the place he describes.

If the origin of the other stories be deducible from the position laid down by Mr. Douce, then, by parity of reasoning, the writer of the tale in question was the compiler of the series —and most probably an Englishman: at all events, his work might be *prepared* in England. But this would not be conceded; and it is only by supposing an interpolation of the story, or of part of the story, that the difficulty is to be obviated. At any rate, the circumstance itself cannot justly be adduced in *proof* either one way or the other. But whoever was the author, or *authors*, (which is more probable), and wherever they were produced, it is for the most part agreed that these tales were collected as early as the commencement of the fourteenth century—if not long before. Through a period of five hundred years, they have afforded a popular entertainment: the uncultivated minds of the middle

ages valued them as a repertory of theological information, and later times as an inexhaustible fund of dramatic incident.

Of that which is called by Mr. Douce the English Gesta, it now remains to speak. "This work was *undoubtedly* composed in England in imitation of the other; and therefore, it will be necessary for the future to distinguish the two works by the respective appellations of the *original*, and the *English Gesta* [1]." "It is natural to suppose, that a work like the *original Gesta* would stimulate some person to the compilation of one that should emulate, if not altogether supersede it; and accordingly this design was accomplished at a very early period by some Englishman, in all probability, a monk [2]." The feeling on my mind with regard to this

1 Douce. *Illustr. of Shakspeare,* Vol. II. p. 362.
2 *Ibid.* p. 364.

Gesta certainly is, that it was *intended* for the the same work as the original; but that, in the transcription, with the latitude which the "*Adam scriveners*" of old invariably allowed themselves, many alterations, (miscalled improvements,) were made, together with some additions. The English translations of this last compilation vary frequently from their original. For instance, in the eighteenth chapter of the MS. ["*English*"] Gesta, fol. 17. a knight falls in love with Aglaës, daughter of the emperor POLENTIUS; but in the English translation of the story (in 1648, a thin 18mo. containing forty-four stories) this same person is styled PHILOMINUS. It forms "The fourteenth History." Now the fact, that no manuscript of this Gesta, exists in any of the catalogues of continental libraries, is easily accounted for, on the supposition of its being transcribed in England, and

consequently confined to this country. For other nations, being in possession of an authenticated original, would have little inducement to seek after a newly fabricated copy. English verses found therein, with English proper names, and English law terms, and modes of speech, (arguments on which Mr. Douce lays much stress,) no more constitute another work than Horace's Art of Poetry, translated by Roscommon; or than Donne's Satires, modernized by Pope.

As the annexed tales gave occasion to some of Shakspeare's plays, and moreover are not defective in that kind of interest which is the peculiar merit of such things, I shall transcribe as many as appear in the English translation[1], following Mr. Douce's arrange-

1 I follow a copy printed in 1703, "for R. Chiswell, B. Walford, G. Conyers, at the Ring in Little Britain, and J. W." It is a reprint of the edition of 1648, containing forty-four stories; and

ment, in order to shew that the difference between the two Gestas is not so wide as this gentleman appears to imagine. Such as are of no interest, I shall omit.

CHAPTER I.

There reigned some time in Rome a wise and mighty emperor, named Anselm, who did bear in his arms a shield of silver with five red roses; this emperor had three sons whom he loved much; he had also continual war with the king of Egypt, in which war he lost all his temporal goods except a precious tree. It fortuned after on a day that he gave battel to the same king of Egypt, wherein he was grievously wounded, nevertheless he obtained the victory, notwithstanding he had his deadly wound; wherefore while he lay at point of death, he called

is rather scarce. The title-page assures us that it is "very pleasant in reading, and profitable in practice." I hope it may be found so. Amongst the late Sir M. M. Sykes's books, was a Black Letter copy of the same work, printed in 1672, "by Edward Crowch for A. Crook." It is in excellent condition, which most other copies are not.

unto his eldest son, and said: My dear and well-beloved son, all my temporal riches are spent, and almost nothing is left me, but a precious tree, the which stands in the midst of my empire; I give to thee all that is under the earth, and above the earth of the same tree. O my reverend father (quoth he) I thank you much.

Then said the emperor, call to me my second son. Anon the eldest son greatly joying of his father's gift, called in his brother; and when he came, the emperor said, my dear son, I may not make my testament, forasmuch as I have spent all my goods, except a tree which stands in the midst of mine empire, of the which tree, I bequeath to thee all that is great and small. Then answered he and said, My reverend father, I thank you much.

Then said the emperor, call to me my third son, and so it was done. And when he was come, the emperor said, My dear son, I must die of these wounds, and I have only a precious tree, of which I have given thy brethren their portion, and to thee I bequeath thy portion: for I will that thou have of the said tree all that is wet and dry. Then said his son, Father, I thank you. Soon after the emperor had made his bequest, he died. And shortly after the eldest son took possession of the tree. Now

when the second son heard this, he came to him, saying, My brother, by what law or title occupy you this tree? Dear brother, quoth he, I occupy it by this title, my father gave me all that is under the earth, and above of the said tree, by reason thereof the tree is mine. Unknowing to thee, quoth the second brother, he gave unto me all that is great and small of the said tree, and therefore I have as great right in the tree as you. This hearing the third son, he came to them and said, My well-beloved brethren it behoveth you not to strive for this tree, for I have as much right in the tree as ye, for by the law ye wot, that the last will and testament ought to stand, for of truth he gave me of the said tree all that is wet and dry, and therefore the tree by right is mine: but forasmuch as your words are of great force and mine also, my counsel is, that we be judged by reason: for it is not good nor commendable that strife or dissension should be among us. Here beside dwelleth a king full of reason, therefore to avoid strife let us go to him, and each of us lay his right before him; and as he shall judge, let us stand to his judgment: then said his brethren thy counsel is good, wherefore they went all three unto the king of reason, and each of them

severally sheweth forth his right unto him, as it is said before.

When the king had heard the titles, he rehearsed them all again severally: First, saying to the eldest son thus: You say (quoth the king) that your father gave you all that is under the earth and above the earth of the said tree. And to the second brother he bequeathed all that is great and small of that tree. And to the third brother he gave all that is wet and dry.

And with that he laid the law to them, and said that this will ought to stand.

Now my dear friends, briefly I shall satisfie all your requests, and when he had thus said, he turned him unto the eldest brother, saying, My dear friend, if you list to abide the judgment of right, it behoveth you to be letten blood of the right arm. My lord, (quoth he) your will shall be done. Then the king called for a discreet physician, commanding him to let him blood.

When the eldest son was letten blood, the king said unto them all three: My dear friends, where is your father buried? then answered they and said: forsooth my lord in such a place. Anon the king commanded to dig in the ground for the body, and

to take a bone out of his breast, and to bury the body again: and so it was done. And when the bone was taken out, the king commanded that it should be laid in the blood of the elder brother, and it should lie till it had received kindly the blood, and then to be laid in the sun and dried, and after that it should be washt with clear water: his servants fulfilled all that he had commanded: and when they began to wash, the blood vanished clean away, when the king saw this, he said to the second son, It behoveth that thou be letten blood, as thy brother was. Then said he, My lord's will shall be fulfilled, and anon he was done unto like as his brother was in all things, and when they began to wash the bone, the blood vanished away. Then said the king to the third son, It behoveth thee to be letten blood likewise. He answered and said, My lord it pleaseth me well so to be. When the youngest brother was letten blood, and done unto in all things as the two brethren were before, then the king's servants began to wash the bone, but neither for washing nor rubbing might they do away the blood of the bone, but it ever appeared bloody: when the king saw this, he said it appeareth openly now that this blood is of the nature of the bone, thou art his true son, and the other two are bastards, I judge thee the tree for evermore.

CHAPTER II.

In Rome there dwelt sometimes a noble emperor, named Dioclesian, who loved exceedingly the vertue of charity, wherefore he desired greatly to know what fowl loved her young best, to the intent that he might thereby grow to more perfect charity; it fortuned upon a day, that the emperor rode to a forrest to take his disport, whereas he found the nest of a great bird, (called in Latin *struchio calemi*, in English an ostridge) with her young, the which young bird the emperor took with him, and closed her in a vessel of glass, the dam of this little bird followed unto the emperor's palace, and flew into the hall where her young one was. But when she saw her young one, and could not come to her, nor get her out, she returned again to the forrest, and abode there three days, and at the last she came again to the palace, bearing in her mouth a worm called *thumare*, and when she came where her young one was, she let the worm fall upon the glass, by virtue of which worm the glass brake, and the young one flew forth with her dam. When the emperor saw this, he praised much the dam of the

bird, which laboured so diligently to deliver her young one.

CHAPTER IV.

" The emperor Gauterus," &c.—This is the XXIst Tale, Vol. II. of the *original* Gesta ; and, as the reader will see, *not* related with much variety.

CHAPTER XVIII.

In Rome some time dwelt a mighty emperor, named Philominus, who had one only daughter, who was fair and gracious in the sight of every man, who had to name Aglaes. There was also in the emperor's palace a gentle knight that loved dearly this lady. It befel after on a day, that this knight talked with this lady, and secretly uttered his desire to her. Then she said courteously, seeing you have uttered to me the secrets of your heart, I will likewise for your love utter to you the secrets of my heart, and truly I say, that above all other I love you best. Then said the knight, I purpose to visit the Holy Land, and therefore give me your troth, that this seven years you shall take no other

man, but only for my love to tarry for me so long, and if I come not again by this day seven years, then take what man you like best. And likewise I promise you that within this seven years I will take no wife. Then said she, this covenant pleaseth me well. When this was said, each of them was betrothed to other, and then this knight took his leave of the lady, and went to the Holy Land. Shortly after the emperor treated with the king of Hungaria for the marriage of his daughter. Then came the king of Hungary to the emperor's palace, to see his daughter, and when he had seen her, he liked marvellous well her beauty and her behaviour, so that the emperor and the king were accorded in all things as touching the marriage, upon the condition that the damsel would consent. Then called the emperor the young lady to him, and said, O my fair daughter, I have provided for thee, that a king shall be thy husband, if thou list consent, therefore tell me what answer thou wilt give to this. Then said she to her father, it pleaseth me well: but one thing, dear father, I intreat of you, if it might please you to grant me: I have vowed to keep my virginity, and not to marry these seven years; therefore, dear father, I beseech you for all the love that is between your gracious fatherhood

and me, that you name no man to be my husband till these seven years be ended, and then I shall be ready in all things to fulfil your will. Then said the emperor, sith it is so that thou hast thus vowed, I will not break thy vow, but when these seven years be expired, thou shalt have the king of Hungary to thy husband.

Then the emperor sent forth his letters to the king of Hungary, praying him if it might please him to stay seven years for the love of his daughter, and then he should speed without fail. Herewith the king was pleased and content to stay the prefixed day.

And when the seven years were ended, save a day, the young lady stood in her chamber window, and wept sore, saying, Woe and alas, as to-morrow my love promised to be with me again from the Holy Land: and also the king of Hungary to-morrow will be here to marry me, according to my father's promise: and if my love comes not at a certain hour, then am I utterly deceived of the inward love I bear to him.

When the day came, the king hasted toward the emperor, to marry his daughter, and was royally arrayed in purple. And while the king was riding on his way, there came a knight riding on his way,

who said, I am of the empire of Rome, and now am lately come from the Holy Land, and I am ready to do you the best service I can. And as they rode talking by the way, it began to rain so fast, that all the king's apparel was sore wet: then said the knight, my lord ye have done foolishly, for as much as ye brought not with you your house: then said the king, Why speakest thou so? My house is large and broad, and made of stones, and mortar, how should I bring then with me, my house? thou speakest like a fool. When this was said, they rode on till they came to a great deep water, and the king smote his horse with his spurs, and leapt into the water, so that he was almost drowned. When the knight saw this, and was over on the other side of the water without peril, he said to the king, Ye were in peril, and therefore ye did foolishly, because you brought not with you your bridge. Then said the king, thou speakest strangely, my bridge is made of lime and stone, and containeth in quality more than half a mile: how should I then bear with me my bridge? therefore thou speakest foolishly. Well, said the knight, my foolishness may turn thee to wisdom. When the king had ridden a little further, he asked the knight what time of day it was. Then said the knight, if any man hath list to eat, it

is time of the day to eat. Wherefore my lord, pray take a *modicum* with me, for that is no dishonour to you, but great honour to me before the states of this empire: Then said the king, I will gladly eat with thee. They sat both down in a fair vine garden, and there dined together, both the king and the knight. And when dinner was done, and that the king had washed, the knight said unto the king, My lord ye have done foolishly, for that ye brought not with you your father and mother. Then, said the king, what sayest thou? My father is dead, and my mother is old, and may not travel, how should I then bring them with me? therefore to say the truth, a foolisher man than thou art did I never hear. Then said the knight, every work is praised at the end.

When the knight had ridden a little further, and nigh to the emperor's palace, he asked leave to go from him, for he knew a nearer way to the palace, to the young lady, that he might come first, and carry her away with him. Then said the king, I pray thee tell me by what place thou purposest to ride? then said the knight, I shall tell you the truth: this day seven years I left a net in a place, and now I purpose to visit it, and draw it to me, and if it be whole, then will I take it to me, and keep it

as a precious jewel; if it be broken, then will I leave it: and when he had thus said, he took his leave of the king, and rode forth, but the king kept the broad highway.

When the emperor heard of the king's coming, he went towards him with a great company, and royally received him, causing him to shift his wet cloaths, and to put on fresh apparel. And when the emperor and the king were set at meat, the emperor welcomed him with all the chear and solace that he could. And when he had eaten, the emperor asked tydings of the king; My lord, said he, I shall tell you what I have heard this day by the way: there came a knight to me, and reverently saluted me; and anon after there fell a great rain, and greatly spoiled my apparel. And anon the knight said, Sir, ye have done foolishly, for that ye brought not with you your house. Then said the emperor, what cloathing had the knight on? A cloak, quoth the king. Then said the emperor, sure that was a wise man, for the house whereof he spake was a cloak, and therefore he said to you, that you did foolishly, because you came without your cloak, then your cloaths had not been spoiled with rain. Then said the king, when he had ridden a little further, we came to a deep

water, and I smote my horse with my spurs, and I was almost drowned, but he rid through the water without any peril: then said he to me, you did foolishly, for that you brought not with you your bridge. Verily said the emperor, he saith truth, for he called the squires the bridge, that should have ridden before you, and assayed the deepness of the water. Then said the king, we rode further, and at the last he prayed me to dine with him. And when he had dined, he said, I did unwisely, because I brought not with me my father and mother. Truly said the emperor, he was a wise man, and saith [wisely]: for he called your father and mother, bread and wine, and other victual. Then said the king, we rode further, and anon after he asked me leave to go from me, and I asked earnestly whether he went: and he answered again, and said, this day seven years, I left a net in a private place, and now I will ride to see it; and if it be broken and torn, then will I leave it, but if it be as I left it, then shall it be unto me right precious. When the emperor heard this, he cryed with a loud voice, and said, O ye my knights and servants, come ye with me speedily unto my daughter's chamber, for surely that is the net of which he spake; and forthwith his

knights and servants went unto his daughter's chamber, and found her not, for the aforesaid knight had taken her with him. And thus the king was deceived of the damsel, and he went home again to his own country ashamed.

CHAPTER XXI.

Theodosius reigned, a wise emperour, in the city of Rome, and mighty he was of power; the which emperour had three daughters. So it liked to this emperour to know which of his daughters loved him best. And then he said to the eldest daughter, how much lovest thou me? forsooth, quoth she, more than I do myself, therefore, quoth he, thou shalt be highly advanced, and married her to a rich and mighty king. Then he came to the second, and said to her, daughter, how much lovest thou me? As much, forsooth, said she, as I do myself. So the emperour married her to a duke. And then he said to the third daughter, how much lovest thou me? forsooth, quoth she, as much as ye be worthy, and no more. Then said the emperour, daughter, sith thou lovest me no more, thou

shalt not be married so richly as thy sisters be. And then he married her to an earl. After this it happened that the emperour held battle against the king of Egypt. And the king drove the emperour out of the empire, in so much that the emperour had no place to abide in. So he wrote letters, ensealed with his ring, to his first daughter, that said that she loved him more than herself, for to pray her of succouring in that great need, because he was put out of his empire. And when the daughter had read these letters, she told it to the king, her husband. Then, quoth the king, it is good that we succour him in this need. I shall, quoth he, gatheren an host and help him in all that I can or may, and that will not be done without great costage. Yea, quoth she, it were sufficient if that we would grant him five knights to be in fellowship with him, while he is out of his empire. And so it was ydone indeed. And the daughter wrote again to the father, that other help might he not have but five knights of the king to be in his fellowship, at the cost of the king her husband. And when the emperour heard this, he was heavy in his heart, and said, alas! alas! all my trust was in her, for she said she loved me more than herself, and therefore I advanced her so high.

Then he wrote to the second that said she loved him as much as herself, and when she had read his letters, she shewed his errand to her husband, and gave him in counsel that he should find him meat and drink and clothing honestly, as for the state of such a lord during time of his need. And when this was granted, she wrote letters again to her father. The emperor was heavy with this answer, and said, "Sith my two daughters have thus treated me, soothly I shall prove the third. And so he wrote to the third, that said she loved him as much as he was worthy, and prayed her of succour in his need, and told her the answer of her two sisters. So the third daughter, when she had considered the mischief of her father, she told her husband in this form: 'My worshipful lord, do succour me now in this great need, my father is put out of his empire and his heritage.' Then spake he, 'What were thy will, I do thereto?' 'That ye gather a great host,' quoth she, 'and help him to fight against his enemies.' 'I shall fulfil thy will,' said the earl, and gathered a great host, and went with the emperour at his own costage to the battle, and had the victory, and set the emperour again in his heritage. And then said the emperour, 'blessed be the hour I gat my youngest daughter: I loved

her less than any of the other, and now in my need she hath succoured me, and the other have yfailed me; and therefore after my death she shall have mine empire. And so it was done indeed; for after the death of the emperour, the youngest daughter reigned in his stead, and ended peaceably. HARL. MS. No. *7333*.

This, as the reader will be aware, is the story of Lear in Shakspeare; but there were many popular tales built upon the same story.

CHAPTER XXV.

There was a powerful emperor called Andronicus, before whom a knight was wrongfully accused. When the charge could not be substantiated, his majesty proposed to him certain puzzling questions, which were to be accurately answered, under pain of death. The knight expressed himself ready to do his best. Then said the emperor, ‘How far is heaven distant from hell? That is the first question.’ ‘As far,’ replied he, ‘as a sigh is from the heart.’

Emperor. And how deep is the sea?

Knight. A stone's throw.

Emperor. How many flaggons of salt water are there in the sea?

Knight. Give me the number of flaggons of *fresh* water, and I will tell you.

* * * * * * * *

Emperor. To the first question you answered, that the distance between heaven and hell, was as great as between a sigh and the heart. How can this be?

Knight. A sigh passes from the heart with the rapidity of a glance; and in like manner the soul goes from the body into a state of punishment or happiness.

Emperor. How is the depth of the sea a stone's throw?

Knight. All weight descends; and because a stone is heavy it drops to the bottom of the sea at once. Its depth is therefore a *stone's throw*.

Emperor. And how, if you knew the number of flaggons of fresh water, could you estimate the number of salt? This seems impossible.

Knight. Be good enough to try it. Begin the reckoning yourself.

* * * * * * * *

The emperor, pleased with the knight's shrewdness, bids him 'Go in peace.'—*MS. Copy of the* GEST. ROM.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Bononius was emperor of Rome, &c. &c.

This is the same story as the LII Tale of the *original* Gesta, Vol. 2. *Overpassed by Mr. Douce.*

CHAPTER XXVII.

Antonius governed the city of Rome with great wisdom. He was exceedingly fond of the game of chess; and observing, on one occasion, that when the men were replaced in the bag as usual, the king was confounded with the inferior pieces, it led him to reflections upon the vanity of human greatness. He thereupon determines to make a triple division of his kingdom, and hasten to the Holy Land. He did so, and died in peace.

CHAPTER XXX.

The emperor Averrhoes, &c. &c.

This is the story of the knight Placidus, in the XXX Tale of the original Gesta, with some varia-

tions. Vol. 2. This also Mr. Douce has omitted to observe.

CHAPTER XXXI.

The following tale, together with Mr. Douce's remarks, I extract, *verbatim*, from the second volume of the Illustrations of Shakspeare. It happened in Rome, under the reign of one PLEBENS, according to the MS. It should be premised that the first part of the story resembles Tale LXIX. Vol. I.

" A law was made at Rome that the sentinels of the city should each night examine what was passing in all the houses, so that no private murders should be committed, nor any thing done whereby the city should be endangered. It happened that an old knight named Josias had married a young and beautiful woman who, by the sweetness of her singing, attracted many persons to his house, several of whom came for the purpose of making love to her. Among these were three young men who were high in the emperor's favour. They respectively agreed with the woman for a private assignation, for which she was to receive twenty marks.

She discloses the matter to her husband, but not choosing to give up the money, prevails on him to consent to the murder of the gallants, and the robbing of their persons. This is accomplished, and the bodies deposited in a cellar. The woman, mindful of the new law that had been made, sends for one of the sentinels, who was her brother, pretends that her husband had killed a man in a quarrel, and prevails on him, for a reward, to dispose of the dead body. She then delivers to him the first of the young men, whom he puts into a sack, and throws into the sea. On his return to the sister, she pretends to go into the cellar to draw wine, and cries out for help. When the sentinel comes to her, she tells him that the dead man is returned. At this, he of course expresses much surprise, but putting the second body into his sack, ties a stone round its neck and plunges it into the sea. Returning once more, the woman, with additional arts plays the same part again. Again he is deceived, and taking away the third body, carries it into a forest, makes a fire, and consumes it. During this operation he has occasion to retire, and in the mean time a knight on horseback, who was going to a tournament, passes by, and alights to warm himself

at the fire. On the other's return, the knight is mistaken for the dead man, and with many bitter words thrown into the fire, horse and all[1]. The sentinel goes back to his sister, and receives the stipulated reward. A hue and cry had now been made after the young men who were missing. The husband and wife engage in a quarrel, and the murder is of course discovered.

"This story has been immediately taken from *The seven wise Masters*, where it forms the *example* of the sixth master. The ground-work is, no doubt, oriental, and may be found, perhaps in its most ancient form, in *The little hunchbacked taylor*, of *The Arabian Nights*. It was imported into Europe very early, and fell into the hands of the lively and entertaining French minstrels, who have treated it in various ways, as may be seen in Le Grand[1] *Fableaux et Contes*, tom. iv., where it is related five times. The several imitations of it from *The seven wise masters*, may be found in all the editions of Prince *Erastus*, an Italian modification[2] of the *Wise masters*. It forms the substance of a well-con-

1 Setting aside the *tragical* part of this story, it would be susceptible of much comic effect.

2 It is curious that the difference in the editions of the *Wise masters*, Mr. Douce calls a MODIFICATION ; but the same kind of thing in the *Gesta*, is a *distinct work*.

structed and entertaining story of two friars, John and Richard, who are said to have resided at Norwich, in the reign of Henry the fifth. This is related in Heywood's *History of women*, under the title of *The faire ladie of Norwich* [1], and has crept into Blomefield's *History of Norfolk* in a very extraordinary manner, unaccompanied with any comment, but with the addition of the murderer's name, who is unaccountably stated to be Sir Thomas Erpingham, a well-known character [2]. In the Bodleian library there is an old English poem entitled, *A merry jest of Dane Hew, munck of Leicestre, and how he was foure times slain, and once hanged.* Printed at London, by J. Alde, in 4to. without date. This is probably the same story, which has certainly been borrowed from one of those related by the Norman minstrels."

1 P. 253, folio edit.

2 "Vol. iii. p. 647. Mr. Gough speaks of it as separately printed. *Brit. Topogr.* ii. 27. It is also copied in Burton's *Unparalleled Varieties*, p. 159. edit. 1699, 12mo. and *The Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. i. p. 310. It has twice been versified; 1st anonymously under the title of *A hue and cry after the Priest, or, the Convent, a Tale*, 1749, 8vo; and 2dly by Mr. Jodrell, under that of *The Knight and the Friars*, 1785, 4to." DOUCE. It should be added, that it has been a third time versified by Mr. Colman, in *Broad Grins*, &c.

CHAP. XXXII.

For this chapter I am also indebted to the *Illustrations*, &c.

" Folliculus, a knight, was fond of hunting and tournaments. He had an only son, for whom three nurses were provided. Next to this child he loved his falcon and his greyhound. It happened one day that he was called to a tournament, whither his wife and domestics went also, leaving the child in the cradle, the greyhound lying by him, and the falcon on his perch. A serpent that inhabited a hole near the castle, taking advantage of the profound silence that reigned, crept from his habitation and advanced towards the cradle to devour the child. The falcon, perceiving the danger, fluttered with his wings till he awoke the dog, who instantly attacked the invader, and after a fierce conflict, in which he was sorely wounded, killed him. He then lay down on the ground to lick and heal his wounds. When the nurses returned they found the cradle overturned, the child thrown out, and the ground covered with blood, as well as the dog, who, they immediately concluded, had killed the child. Terrified at the idea of meeting the anger of the parents, they deter-

mined to escape, but in their flight fell in with their mistress, to whom they were compelled to relate the supposed murder of the child by the greyhound. The knight soon arrived to hear the sad story, and, maddened with fury, rushed forward to the spot. The poor wounded and faithful animal made an effort to rise, and welcome his master with his accustomed fondness; but the enraged knight received him on the point of his sword, and he fell lifeless to the ground. On examination of the cradle the infant was found alive and unhurt, and the dead serpent lying by him. The knight now perceived what had happened, lamented bitterly over his faithful dog, and blamed himself for having depended too hastily on the words of his wife. Abandoning the profession of arms, he broke his lance in three pieces, and vowed a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, where he spent the rest of his days in peace.

"This tale is likewise borrowed by the compiler of the *Gesta*, from the Seven Wise Masters, and of oriental construction. It is originally in Pilpay's Fables, being that of *The Santon and the broken Pitcher*.

"There is a very extraordinary tradition in North Wales, of an incident resembling that in our story having happened to Prince Llewellyn about the year

1205. He is said to have erected a tomb over his faithful dog, still known in Carnarvonshire by the name of *Celhart's Grave*[1]. This tradition is the subject of an elegant ballad by the honourable Mr. Spencer, privately printed, in a single sheet, under the title of *Beth Gêlert, or the Grave of the Greyhound.* At Abergavenny Priory Church there is said to be the figure of an armed knight with a dog at his feet; and with this person, whoever he was, the story of *Celhart* has also been connected. But the dog, as well as other animals, is frequently found at the feet of figures on old monuments. On the whole, the subject appears not undeserving of the consideration of Welsh Antiquaries. It would be proper however, on any such occasion, to bear in mind the numerous applications of circumstances altogether fabulous to real persons; one example of which has occurred in the story from the *Gesta* that immediately precedes the present.

" It may be thought worth adding, that Virgil's *original Gnat* resembled in its outline, as given by Donatus, the story in the *Gesta.* A shepherd there falls asleep in a marshy spot of ground; a serpent

1 " Jones's *Reliques of the Welsh Bards*, p. 75, where there is an old Welsh song, or *Englyn* on the subject."—DOUCE.

approaches, and is about to kill him. At this moment a gnat settles on the shepherd's face, stings, and awakens him. He instinctively applies his hand to the wounded part, and crushes the gnat. He soon perceives that he had destroyed his benefactor, and, as the only recompense in his power, erects a tomb to his memory."

CHAP. XLVI.

"Some time ago in Rome there dwelt a noble emperor, of great livelihood, named Alexander, which, above all vertues loved the vertue of bounty; wherefore he ordained a law for great charity, that no man under pain of death should turn a plaice in his dish at his meat, but only eat the whiteside, and not the black; and if any man would attempt to do the contrary, he should suffer death without any pardon: but yet ere he dyed, he should ask three petitions of the emperor what him list (except his life) which should be granted to him.

"It befel after, upon a day, that there became an earl and his son, of a strange country, to speak with the emperor; and when the earl was set at meat, he was served with a plaice, and he which was an hungry and had an appetite to his meat, after he had

eaten the white side, he turned the black side, and began to eat thereof: wherefore, straightway he was accused to the emperor, because he had offended against the law. Then said the emperor, Let him dye according to the law without any delay.

"When the earl's son heard that his father should die, immediately he fell down on both his knees before the emperor, and said, O my reverend lord, I most humbly intreat you, that I may dye for my father. Then said the emperor, It pleaseth me well so that one dye for the offence. Then said the earl's son, Sith it is so that I must dye, I ask the benefit of the law, that is, that I may have three petitions granted ere I dye. The emperor answered and said, Ask what thou wilt, there shall no man say thee nay.

"Then said this young knight, My lord, you have but one daughter, the which I desire of your highness * * *. The emperor granted for fulfilling of the laws, though it were against his will * * *.

"The second petition is this, I ask all thy treasure; and immediately the emperor granted, because he would not be called a breaker of the law. And when the earl's son had received the emperor's treasure, he imparted it both to poor and to rich, by means whereof he obtained their good wills.

"My third petition is this, I ask, my lord, that all their eyes may be put out incontinent that saw my father eat the black side of the plaice. And they that saw him turn the plaice, bethought them, and said within themselves: If we acknowledge that we saw him do this trespass, then shall our eyes be put out: and therefore it is better that we hold us still; And so there was none found that would accuse him.

"When the Earl's son heard this, he said to the emperor, My lord (quoth he) ye see there is no man accuseth my father, therefore give me rightful judgment. Then said the emperor, Forasmuch as no man will acknowledge that they saw him turn the plaice, therefore I will not that thy father shall die. So thus the son saved his father's life, and after the decease of the emperor married his daughter."

CHAP. XLVII.

This Chapter, but with less incident, is the twenty-fifth history of the old English translation, which tolerably well exemplifies the usual arbitrary method of departing from the original text. As there is little interest in the story, I pass it.

CHAP. XLVIII.

"Selestinus reigned, a wise emperor, in Rome, and he had a fair daughter."

* * * * * *

[It is needless to transcribe this tale (which is the origin of the *bond story* in Shakspeare's "Merchant of Venice,") because it is to be found prefixed to all the editions of the drama itself, from the *Pecorone* of Ser Giovanni Fiorentino, an Italian Novelist, who wrote in 1378. It occurs also in an old English MS. preserved in the Harl. Collection, No. 7333, evidently translated from the *Gesta Romanorum*, [Temp. Hen. VI.] which Mr. Douce has given in the 1st volume of his very entertaining "Illustrations of Shakspeare," p. 281. But as the *Tale of the Three Caskets* has not been made so public, I insert it in this place, although it forms the XCIX Chapter of the MS. Gesta. *See also Note* 16. Vol. 2.]

"Some time dwelt in Rome a mighty emperor, named Anselm, who had married the king's daughter of Jerusalem, a fair lady, and gracious in the sight of every man, but she was long time with the emperor ere she bare him any child; wherefore the nobles of the empire were very sorrowful, because

their lord had no heir of his own body begotten: till at last it befell, that this Anselm walked after supper, in an evening, into his garden, and bethought himself that he had no heir, and how the king of Ampluy warred on him continually, for so much as he had no son to make defence in his absence; therefore he was sorrowful, and went to his chamber and slept. Then he thought he saw a vision in his sleep, that the morning was more clear than it was wont to be, and that the moon was much paler on the one side than on the other. And after he saw a bird of two colours, and by that bird stood two beasts, which fed that little bird with their heat. And after that came more beasts, and bowing their breasts toward the bird, went their way: then came there divers birds that sung sweetly and pleasantly, with that the emperor awaked.

"In the morning early this Anselm remembred his vision, and wondred much what it might signifie; wherefore he called to him his philosophers, and all the states of the empire, and told them his dream; charging them to tell him the signification thereof on pain of death, and if they told him the true interpretation thereof, he promised them good reward. Then said they, Dear lord, tell us your dream, and we shall declare to you what it betokens. Then the

emperor told them from the beginning to the ending, as is aforesaid. When the philosophers heard this, with glad chear they answered and said, Sir, the vision that you saw betokeneth good, for the empire shall be clearer than it is.

"The moon that is more pale on the one side than on the other, betokeneth the empress, that hath lost part of her colour, through the conception of a son that she hath conceived. The little bird betokeneth the son that she shall bear. The two beasts that fed this bird, betokeneth the wise and rich men of the empire which shall obey the son. These other beasts that bowed their breasts to the bird, betoken many other nations that shall do him homage. The bird that sang so sweetly to this little bird, betokeneth the Romans, who shall rejoyce and sing because of his birth. This is the very interpretation of your dream.

"When the emperor heard this, he was right joyful. Soon after that, the empress travailed in childbirth, and was delivered of a fair son, at whose birth there was great and wonderful joy made.

"When the king of Ampluy heard this, he thought in himself thus: Lo, I have warred against the emperor all the days of my life, and now he hath a son, who when he cometh to full age, will revenge the

wrong I have done against his father, therefore it is better that I send to the emperor, and beseech htm of truce and peace, that the son may have nothing against me, when he cometh to manhood: when he had thus said to himself, he wrote to the emperor, beseeching him to have peace. When the emperor saw that the king of Ampluy wrote to him more for fear than for love, he wrote again to him, that if he would find good and sufficient sureties to keep the peace, and bind himself all the days of his life to do him service and homage, he would receive him to peace.

"When the king had read the tenor of the emperor's letter, he call'd his council, praying them to give him counsel how he best might do, as touching this matter. Then said they, It is good that ye obey the emperor's will and commandment in all things. For first, in that he desired of you surety for the peace; to this we answer thus, Ye have but one daughter, and the emperor one son, wherefore let a marriage be made between them, and that may be a perpetual covenant of peace. Also he asketh homage and tribute, which it is good to fulfil. Then the king sent his messengers to the emperor, saying, that he would fulfil his desire in all things, if it might please his highness, that his son and the king's

daughter might be married together. All this well pleased the emperor, yet he sent again, saying, If his daughter were a clean virgin from her birth unto that day, he would consent to that marriage. Then was the king right glad, for his daughter was a clean virgin.

"Therefore, when the letters of covenant and compact were sealed, the king furnished a fair ship, wherein he might send his daughter, with many noble knights, ladies, and great riches, unto the emperor, for to have his son in marriage.

"And when they were sailing in the sea, towards Rome, a storm arose so extreamly and so horribly that the ship brake against a rock, and they were all drowned save only the young lady, which fixed her hope and heart so greatly on God, that she was saved, and about three of the clock the tempest ceased, and the lady drove forth over the waves in that broken ship which was cast up again: But a huge whale followed after, ready to devour both the ship and her. Wherefore this young lady, when night came, smote fire with a stone wherewith the ship was greatly lightned, and then the whale durst not adventure toward the ship for fear of that light. At the cock crowing, this young lady was so weary of the great tempest and trouble of sea, that she

slept, and within a little while after the fire ceased, and the whale came and devoured the virgin. And when she awaked and found herself swallowed up in the whale's belly, she smote fire, and with a knife wounded the whale in many places, and when the whale felt himself wounded, according to his nature he began to swim to land.

"There was dwelling at that time in a country near by, a noble earl named Pirris, who for his recreation walking on the sea shore, saw the whale coming towards the land, wherefore he turned home again, and gathered a great many of men and women, and came thither again, and fought with the whale, and wounded him very sore, and as they smote, the maiden that was in his belly cryed with an high voice, and said, O gentle friends, have mercy and compassion on me, for I am a king's daughter, and a true virgin from the hour of my birth unto this day. When the earl heard this, he wondered greatly, and opened the side of the whale, and found the young lady, and took her out: and when she was thus delivered, she told him forthwith whose daughter she was, and how she had lost all her goods in the sea, and how she should have been married unto the emperor's son. And when the earl heard this,

he was very glad, and comforted her the more, and kept her with him till she was well refreshed. And in the mean time he sent messengers to the emperor, letting him to know how the king's daughter was saved.

"Then was the emperor right glad of her safety, and coming, had great compassion on her, saying, Ah good maiden, for the love of my son thou hast suffered much woe: nevertheless, if thou be worthy to be his wife, soon shall I prove. And when he had thus said, he caused three vessels to be brought forth: the first was made of pure gold, well beset with precious stones without, and within full of dead men's bones, and thereupon was engraven this posie: Whoso chuseth me, shall find that he deserveth. The second vessel was made of fine silver, filled with earth and worms, the superscription was thus, Whoso chuseth me, shall find that his nature desireth. The third vessel was made of lead, full within of precious stones, and thereupon was insculpt this posie, Whoso chuseth me, shall find that God hath disposed for him. These three vessels the emperor shewed the maiden, and said; Lo, here daughter, these be rich vessels, if thou chuse one of these, wherein is profit to thee and to others, then

shalt thou have my son. And if thou chuse that wherein is no profit to thee, nor to any other, soothly thou shalt not marry him.

" When the maiden heard this, she lift up her hands to God, and said, Thou Lord, that knowest all things, grant me grace this hour so to chuse, that I may receive the emperor's son. And with that she beheld the first vessel of gold, which was engraven royally, and read the superscription: *Whoso chuseth me, shall find that he deserveth;* saying thus, Though this vessel be full precious, and made of pure gold, nevertheless I know not what is within, therefore, my dear lord, this vessel will I not chuse.

" And then she beheld the second vessel, that was of pure silver, and read the superscription, *Whoso chuseth me, shall find that his nature desireth:* Thinking thus within herself, if I chuse this vessel, what is within I know not, but well I know, there shall I find that nature desireth, and my nature desireth the lust of the flesh, and therefore this vessel will I not chuse.

" When she had seen these two vessels, and had given an answer as touching them, she beheld the third vessel of lead, and read the superscription, *Whoso chuseth me, shall find that God hath disposed:* Thinking within herself, this vessel is not very rich,

nor outwardly precious, yet the superscription saith, *Whoso chuseth me, shall find that God hath disposed:* and without doubt God never disposeth any harm, therefore, by the leave of God, this vessel will I chuse.

"When the emperor heard this, he said, O fair maiden, open thy vessel, for it is full of precious stones, and see if thou hast well chosen or no. And when this young lady had opened it, she found it full of fine gold and precious stones, as the emperor had told her before. Then said the emperor, daughter, because thou hast well chosen, thou shalt marry my son. And then he appointed the wedding day; and they were married with great solemnity, and with much honour continued to their lives end."

CHAP. XLIX.

This story is *wholly* in the original Gesta; Tale L. Vol. 1. Not observed by Mr. Douce.

CHAP. L.

This apologue is also in the original Gesta, with slight variations. See Tale XLV. Vol. 1. It is noticed in the *Illustrations*, &c.

CHAP. LI.

Is also in the original Gesta; Tale LXIV. Vol. 1. Not observed by Mr. Douce.

CHAP. LIV.

In the original Gesta; Tale XL. Vol. 2. p. 148. Noticed in the *Illustrations*.

CHAP. LVI.

In the original Gesta; Tale XX. Vol. 1. Overlooked by Mr. Douce.

CHAP, LXII.

This story, though not exactly the same, resembles Tale I. Vol. 1. Tale XXVII. and part of Tale LV. *Ibid.* But it is really the LXVI. Tale of Vol. 1. *Not noticed by Mr. Douce.*

CHAP. LXVIII.

This is the "Twenty-third History" of the English Translation; but being of little interest, I omit it.

CHAP. LXX.

Is the story of Guido, (and of Sir Guy, Ellis's *Specimens*, &c.) Tale XCI. Vol. 2. Not observed by Mr. Douce.

CHAP. LXXII.

Forms the latter part of Tale XXI. Vol. 2. Not observed by Mr. Douce.

CHAP. LXXVII.

Is the Twenty-eighth History of the English Translation, but not worth transcribing. The latter part of this story is the same with Tale II. and the last Tale of Vol. 2. Mr. Douce notices the *latter*, but it is not so similar by any means as the former.

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

"A law was made at Rome, that no man should marry for beauty, but for riches only; and that no woman should be united to a poor man, unless he should by some means acquire wealth equal to her own. A certain poor knight solicited the hand of a

rich lady, but she reminded him of the law, and desired him to use the best means of complying with it, in order to effect their union. He departed in great sorrow, and after much enquiry, was informed of a rich duke, who had been blind from the day of his birth. Him he resolved to murder, and obtain his wealth; but found that he was protected in the day-time by several armed domestics, and at night by the vigilance of a faithful dog. He contrived, however, to kill the dog with an arrow, and immediately afterwards the master, with whose money, he returned to the lady. He informed her that he had accomplished his purpose; and being interrogated how this had been done in so short a space of time, he related all that had happened. The lady desired, before the marriage should take place, that he would go to the spot where the duke was buried, lay himself on his tomb, listen to what he might hear, and then report it to her. The knight armed himself, and went accordingly. In the middle of the night he heard a voice saying, 'O duke, that liest here, what askest thou that I can do for thee?' The answer was, 'O Jesus, thou upright judge, all that I require is vengeance for my blood unjustly spilt.' The voice rejoined, 'Thirty years from this time thy wish shall be fulfilled.' The

knight, extremely terrified, returned with the news to the lady. She reflected that thirty years were a long period, and resolved on the marriage. During the whole of the above time the parties remained in perfect happiness.

"When the thirty years were nearly elapsed, the knight built a strong castle, and over one of the gates, in a conspicuous place, caused the following verses to be written:

'In my distress, religious aid I sought:
But my distress relieved, I held it nought.
The wolf was sick, a lamb he seemed to be;
But health restored, a wolf again we see.'

Interrogated as to the meaning of these enigmatical lines, the knight at once explained them, by relating his own story, and added, that in eight days time the thirty years would expire. He invited all his friends to a feast at that period, and when the day was arrived, the guests placed at table, and the minstrels attuning their instruments of music, a beautiful bird flew in at the window, and began to sing with uncommon sweetness. The knight listened attentively, and said, 'I fear this bird prognosticates misfortune.' He then took his bow, and

shot an arrow into it, in presence of all the company. Instantly the castle divided into two parts, and, with the knight, his wife, and all who were in it, was precipitated to the lowest depth of the infernal regions. The story adds, that on the spot where the castle stood, there is now a spacious lake, on which no substance whatever floats, but is immediately plunged to the bottom [1]."

CHAPTER LXXIX.

" The dog and the lamp, in this story, are introduced in chap. i. of the other *Gesta*, but the tales have nothing else in common [2]."—Douce. But the *pure virgin* is in Tale XXXV. Vol. II., and the thorn extracted from the lion's foot, in Tale XXIV. Vol. II. The protection afforded by the animal resembles that in Tale XXIX. Vol. II.—The youth's subterranean residence seems copied from the story of the third calendar in the Arabian Nights.

1 From Douce's Abridgement of the *Gesta Romanorum*.
2 The dog is again introduced in Tale XVII. Vol. I.

CHAPTER LXXX.

"The substance of this story," says Mr. Douce, "is incorporated with the old ballad of 'A warning Piece to England, or the Fall of Queen Eleanor.'"—*Coll. of old Ballads,* Vol. I. No. xiii.

CHAPTER LXXXII.

"There dwelt some time in Rome a mighty emperor and a merciful, named Menelay, who ordained such a law, that what innocent person was taken and put in prison, if he might escape and come to the emperor's palace, he should be there safe from all manner of accusations against him in his life time. It was not long after, but it befel, that a knight was accused, wherefore he was taken and put in a strong and dark prison, where he lay a long time, and had no light but a little window, whereat scant light shone in, that lighted him to eat such simple meat as the keeper brought him: wherefore he mourned greatly, and made sorrow that he was thus fast shut up from the sight of men. Nevertheless, when the keeper was gone, there came daily a nightingale in at the window, and sung full

sweetly, by whose song this woful knight was oftentimes fed with joy, and when the bird left off singing, then would she flye into the knight's bosome, and there this knight fed her many a day, of the victual that God sent him. It befel after upon a day, that the knight was greatly desolate of comfort. Nevertheless, the bird that sate in his bosome fed upon kernels of nuts, and thus he said to the bird, sweet bird, I have sustained thee many a day, what wilt thou give me now in my desolation to comfort me? Remember thy self well, how that thou art the creature of God, and so am I also, and therefore help me now in this my great need.

" When the bird heard this, she flew forth from his bosome, and tarried from him three days, but the third day she came again, and brought in her mouth a precious stone, and laid it in the knight's bosom. And when she had so done, she took her flight and flew from him again. The knight marvelled at the stone, and at the bird, and forthwith he took the stone in his hand, and touched his gives and fetters therewith, and presently they fell off. And then he arose and touched the doors of the prison, and they opened, and he escaped, and ran fast to the emperor's palace. When the keeper of the prison perceived this, he blew his horn thrice, and

raised up all the folk of the city, and led them forth, crying with an high voice, lo, the thief is gone, follow we him all. And with that he ran before all his fellows towards the knight. And when he came nigh him, the knight bent his bow, and shot an arrow, wherewith he smote the keeper in the lungs, and slew him, and then ran to the palace, where he found succour against the law."

CHAPTER XCIV.

The same as Tale L. Vol. II. and Tale LXII. Vol. II. Not observed by Mr. Douce.

CHAPTER XCVIII.

" In Rome some time dwelt a mighty emperor, named Martin, which for entire affection kept with him his brother's son, whom men called Fulgentius. With this Martin dwelt also a knight that was steward of the empire, and unkle unto the emperor, which envied this Fulgentius, studying day and night how he might bring the emperor and this youth at debate. Wherefore the steward on a day went to the emperor, and said, My lord, quoth

he, I that am your true servant, am bound in duty to warn your highness, if I hear any thing that toucheth your honour, wherfore I have such things that I must needs utter it in secret to your majesty between us two. Then said the emperor, good friend, say on what thee list.

" My most dear lord, (quoth the steward) Fulgentius your cousin and your nigh kinsman, hath defamed you wonderfully and shamefully throughout all your whole empire, saying that your breath stinketh, and that it is death to him to serve your cup. Then the emperor was grievously displeased, and almost beside himself for anger, and said unto him thus: I pray thee good friend tell me the very truth, if that my breath stinketh as he saith. My lord (quoth the steward) ye may believe me, I never perceived a sweeter breath in my days than yours is. Then said the emperor, I pray thee good friend, tell me how I may bring this thing to good proof.

" The steward answered and said: My Lord (quoth he) ye shall right well understand the truth; for to-morrow next when he serveth you of your cup, ye shall see that he will turn away his face from you, because of your breath, and this is the most

certain proof that may be had of this thing. Verily quoth the emperor, a truer proof cannot be had of this thing. Therefore anon when the steward heard this, he went streight to Fulgentius, and took him aside, saying thus. Dear friend, thou art near kinsman and also nephew unto my lord the emperor, therefore if thou wilt be thankful unto me, I will tell thee of a fault whereof my lord the emperor complaineth oft, and thinks to put thee from him (except it be the sooner amended) and that will be a great reproof to thee. Then said this Fulgentius. Ah good Sir, for his love that died upon the cross, tell me why my lord is so sore moved with me, for I am ready to amend my fault in all that I can or may, and for to be ruled by your discreet counsel.

"Thy breath (quoth the steward) stinketh so sore, that his drink doth him no good, so grievous unto him is the stinking breath of thy mouth. Then said Fulgentius unto the steward? Truly, that perceived I never till now; but what think ye of my breath, I pray you tell me the very truth? Truly (quoth the steward) it stinketh greatly and foul. And this Fulgentius believed all that he had said, and was right sorrowful in his mind, and prayed the steward of his counsel and help in this woful case. Then said

the steward unto him, if that thou wilt do my counsel, I shall bring this matter to a good conclusion, wherefore do as I shall tell thee.

"I counsel thee for the best, and also warn thee, that when thou servest my lord the emperor of his cup, that thou turn thy face away from him, so that he may not smell thy stinking breath, until the time that thou hast provided thee of some remedy therefore.

"Then was Fulgentius right glad, and sware to him that he would do by his counsel.

"Not long after it befell that this young man Fulgentius served his lord as he was wont to do, and therewith suddenly he turned his face from the lord the emperor, as the steward had taught him.

"And when the emperor perceived the avoiding of his head, he smote this young Fulgentius on the breast with his foot, and said to him thus: O thou lewd varlet; now I see well it is true that I have heard of thee, and therefore go thou anon out of my sight, that I may see thee no more in this place. And with that this young Fulgentius wept full sore, and avoided the place, and went out of his sight.

"And when this was done, the emperor called unto him his steward, and said, How may I rid this varlet from the world, that thus hath defamed me? My

most dear lord, quoth the steward, right well you shall have your intent.

"For here beside, within these three miles, ye have brick-makers, which daily make great fire, for to burn brick, and also they make lime, therefore my lord, send to them this night, charge them upon pain of death, that whosoever cometh to them first in the morning, saying to them thus, My lord commandeth them to fulfil his will, that they take him and cast him into the furnace, and burn him: and this night command you this Fulgentius, that he go early in the morning to your workmen, and that he ask them whether they have fulfilled your will which they were commanded, or not; and then shall they, according to your commandment, cast him into the fire, and thus shall he die an evil death.

"Surely quoth the emperor, thy counsel is good, therefore call to me that varlet Fulgentius. And when the young man was come to the emperor's presence, he said to him thus, I charge thee upon pain of death, that thou rise early in the morning, and go to the burners of lime and brick, and that thou be with them early before the sun rise, three miles from this house, and charge them in my behalf, that they fulfil my commandment, or else they shall die a most shameful death.

" Then spake this Fulgentius. My Lord, if God send me my life, I shall fulfil your will, were it that I go to the world's end.

" When Fulgentius had this charge, he could not sleep for thought, that he must rise early to fulfil his lord's commandment. The emperor about midnight sent a messenger on horseback unto his brick-makers, commanding, that upon pain of death, that whosoever came to them first in the morning, saying unto them (as is before rehearsed) they should take him and bind him, and cast him into the fire, and burn him to the bare bones.

" The brick-makers answered and said, it should be done. Then the messenger returns home again, and told the emperor that his commandment should be diligently fulfilled.

" Early in the morning following, Fulgentius arose and prepared him towards his way, and as he went, he heard a bell ring to service, wherefore he went to hear service, and after the end of service he fell asleep, and there slept a long while so soundly, that the priest, nor none other, might awake him.

" The steward desiring inwardly to hear of his death, about two of the clock he went to the workmen, and said unto them thus. Sirs (quoth he) have ye done the emperor's commandment or no?

" The brick-makers answered him and said. No truly, we have not yet done his commandment, but it shall be done, and with that they laid hands on him. Then cried the steward, and said, Good sirs save my life, for the emperor commanded that Fulgentius should be put to death. Then said they, the messenger told us not so, but he bad us, that whosoever came first in the morning, saying as you have said, that we should take him, and cast him into the furnace, and burn him to ashes: and with that they threw him into the fire.

" And when he was burnt, Fulgentius came to them and said: Good sirs, have you done my lord's commandment, yea, soothly, said they, and therefore go ye again to the emperor, and tell him so. Then said Fulgentius, for Christ's love tell me that commandment.

" We had in commandment said they, upon pain of death, that whosoever came to us first in the morning, and said like as thou hast said, that we should take him and cast him into the furnace: But before thee, came the steward, and therefore on him have we fulfilled the emperor's commandment, now he is burnt to the bare bones.

" When Fulgentius heard this, he thanked God, that he had so preserved him from death, therefore he

took his leave of the workmen, and went again to the palace.

" When the emperor saw him, he was almost distract of his wits for anger, and thus he said. Hast thou been with the brick-makers, and fulfilled my commandment? Soothly my gracious Lord I have been there, but ere I came there, your commandment was fulfilled. How may that be true, quoth the emperor?

" Forsooth, said Fulgentius, the steward came to them afore me, and said that I should have said, so they took him and threw him into the furnace, and if I had come any earlier, so would they have done to me, and therefore I thank God, that he hath preserved me from death.

" Then said the emperor, tell me the truth of such questions as I shall demand of thee. Then said Fulgentius to the emperor: You never found me in any falshood, and therefore I greatly wonder why ye have ordained such a death for me? for well ye know, that I am your own brother's son. Then said the emperor to Fulgentius: It is no wonder, for that death I ordained for thee, through counsel of the steward, because thou didst defame me throughout all my empire, saying, that my breath did stink so grievously, that it was death to thee, and in

token thereof thou turnedst away thy face when thou servedst me of my cup, and that I saw with mine eyes; and for this cause I ordained for thee such a death; and yet thou shalt die, except I hear a better excuse.

"Then answered Fulgentius, and said; Ah dear lord, if it might please your highness for to hear me. I shall shew you a subtile and deceitful imagination. Say on, quoth the emperor.

"The steward (quoth Fulgentius) that is now dead, came to me and said, that ye told unto him that my breath did stink, and thereupon he counselled me, that when I served you of your cup, I should turn my face away, I take God to witness, I lie not.

"When the emperor heard this, he believed him, and said. O my nephew, now I see, through the right wise judgment of God, the steward is burnt, and his own wickedness and envy is fallen on himself, for he ordained this malice against thee, and therefore thou art much bound to Almighty God, that hath preserved thee from death[1].

1 On this story Schiller seems to have founded his legend of "Fridolin, or the Road to the Iron Foundery," lately translated by Mr. Collier. In Schiller the cause of the youth's purposed destruction is *jealousy* malignantly excited in the mind of his master, by Robert the Huntsman.

"This story may have come from the East. (See Scott's *Tales from the Arabic and Persian*, p. 53, where there is an excellent story, of similar construction.) It is likewise extremely well related in the *Contes devots*, or *Miracles of the Virgin*, (Le Grand, *Fabliaux*, v. 74.) and in other places."—Douce.

But the termination, and most of the principal circumstances of the story are similar. Here then arises a pretty strong inference that Mr. Douce's opinions relative to what he terms the *English Gesta*, are not altogether accurate. Whence had Schiller this story, if not from the Gesta? And if from thence a copy of it was probably in his possession. The resemblance is too close to suppose it furnished by tradition when there were actually several printed or MS. copies. And even in that view, it opposes the idea of an *English* origin, which is the hypothesis of Mr. Douce. Such are my sentiments; the following is the account given by Mr. Collier. "Not long subsequent to the first publication of 'Fridolin,' it became so great a favourite throughout Germany, that it was converted into a five act play, by Holbein, the director of the theatre at Prague; and during the fifteen years that followed, it was represented on most of the continental stages, with great success, other authors making use of the same story. It was also set to music by C. F. Weber, master of the chapel at Berlin, and in this shape it was extremely popular. Mr. Boettiger informs us, that the origin of the story is an *Alsatian tradition*, which Schiller learnt when at Manheim. The probable adherence to this *Volkssage*, as far as was at all convenient, will account for the mode in which the author has treated some incidents. We know of no similar narrative, or ballad, in English."—*Remarks on 'Fridolin,'* p. 37.

CHAPTER C.

The commencement of this story is in Tale XXIV. Vol. II. Not observed by Mr. Douce[1].

CHAPTER CI.

"In Rome dwelt some time a mighty emperor, named Manelay, which had wedded the king's daughter of Hungaria, a fair lady, and gracious in all her works, especially she was merciful. On a time, as the emperor lay in his bed, he bethought him, that he would go and visit the Holy Land. And on the morrow he called to him the empress his wife, and his own only brother, and thus he said; Dear lady, I may not, nor will not hide from you the privities of my heart, I purpose to visit the Holy Land, wherefore I ordain thee principally to be lady and governess over all my empire, and all my people; and under thee I ordain here my brother to be thy steward, for to provide all things may be profitable to my empire and my people.

1 These omissions of Mr. Douce, it is presumed, indicate a less considerable variation than he supposed; while, at the same time, they go a great way to prove the *two* Gestas *one*.

" Then said the empress, sith it will no otherwise be, but that needs thou wilt go to visit the city of Jerusalem, I shall be in your absence as true as any turtle that hath lost her mate; for as I believe, ye shall not escape thence with your life.

" The emperor anon comforts her with fair words, and kissed her, and after that took his leave of her and all others, and went toward the city of Jerusalem.

" And anon after the emperor was gone, his brother became so proud, that he oppressed poor men and robbed rich men; and he did worse than this, for he daily stirred the empress to commit sin with him; but she ever answered again as a holy and devout woman; nevertheless this knight would not leave with this answer, but ever when he found her alone, he made his complaint to her, and stirred her by all the ways that he could to sin.

" When this lady saw that he would not cease for any answer, nor would not amend himself; when she saw her time, she called to her three or four of the worthiest men of the empire, and said to them thus: It is not unknown to you, that my lord the emperor ordained me principal governor of this empire, and also he ordained his brother to be steward under me, and that he should do nothing without my

counsel, but he doth all the contrary; for he oppresseth greatly poor men, and likewise robbeth the rich men; yet he would do more than this if he might have his intent; wherefore I command you in my lord's name, that you bind him fast, and cast him into prison.

"Then said they, soothly he hath done many evil deeds since our lord the emperor went, therefore we be ready to obey your commandments, but in this matter, you must answer for us to our lord the emperor.

"Then said she, Dread ye not, if my lord knew what he had done as well as I, he would put him to the foulest death that could be thought. Immediately these men laid hands on him, and bound him fast with iron chains, and put him in prison, where he lay long time after, till at the last it fortuned, there came tidings that the emperor was coming home, and had obtained great renown and victory. When his brother heard of his coming, he said, Would to God my brother might not find me in prison, for if he do, he will enquire the cause of my imprisonment of the empress, and she will tell him all the truth how I moved her to commit sin, and so for her I shall have no favour of my brother, but lose my life; this know I well: therefore it shall not

be so. Then sent he a messenger unto the empress, praying her that she would vouchsafe to come to the prison-door, that he might speak a word or two with her.

"The empress came to him, and enquired of him what he would have. He answered and said, O lady, have mercy upon me, for if the emperor my brother find me in prison, then shall I die without any remedy.

"Then said the empress, if I might know that thou wouldst be a good man, and leave thy folly, thou shouldest find grace. Then did he promise her assuredly to be true, and to amend all his trespass. When he had thus promised, the empress deliver'd him anon, and made him to be bathed and shaven, and apparelled him worthily, according to his state, and then she said thus to him; Now good brother take thy steed, and come with me, that we may meet my lord. He answered and said, lady, I am ready to fulfil your will and commandment in all things; and then the empress took him with her, and many other knights, and so rode forth to meet the emperor: and as they rode together by the way, they saw a great hart run before them, wherefore every man, with such hounds as they had, chased him on horseback; so that with the empress was left no creature,

save only the emperor's brother, who seeing that no man was there but they two, thus he said unto the empress ; Lo, lady, here is beside a private forrest, and long it is ago that I spake to thee of love.

" Then said the empress, Ah fool, what may this be ? Yesterday I delivered thee out of prison upon thy promise, in hope of amendment, and now thou art returned to thy folly again ; wherefore I say unto thee, as I have said before. Then said he, if thou wilt not consent unto me, I shall hang thee here upon a tree in this forrest, where no man shall find thee, and so shalt thou die an evil death. The empress answered meekly, and said, Though thou smite off my head, or put me to death with all manner of torments, thou shalt never have my consent to such a sin.

" When he heard this, he unclothed her all save her smock, and hanged her up by the hair upon a tree, and tied her steed before her, and so rode to his fellows, and told them that a great host of men met him, and took the empress away from him, and when he had told them this, they made all great sorrow.

" It befell on the third day after, there came an earl to hunt in that forrest, and as he rode beating the bushes, he unkennelled a fox, whom his hounds fol-

lowed fast, till they came near the tree where the empress hanged. And when the dogs smelt the savour of the empress, they left the fox, and ran towards the tree as fast they could.

"The earl seeing this, wondred greatly, and spurring his horse, followed them till he came where the empress hanged. When the earl saw her thus hanging, he marvelled greatly, forasmuch as she was right fair and beautiful to behold; wherefore he said unto her in this manner-wise: O woman, who art thou? and of what country? and wherefore hangest thou here in this manner?

"The empress that was not yet fully dead, but at point ready to die, answered and said, I am, quoth she, a strange woman, and am come out of a far country, but how I came hither, God knoweth. Then answered the earl and said, whose horse is this that standest by thee bound to this tree? Then answered the lady and said, that it was hers. When the earl heard this, he saw well that she was a gentlewoman, and come of noble lineage, wherefore he was the rather moved with pity, and said unto her: O fair lady, thou seemest of gentle blood, and therefore I purpose to deliver thee from this mischief, if thou wilt promise to go with me, and nourish my fair young daughter, and teach her at home

in my castle, for I have no child but only her, and if thou keep her well thou shalt have a good reward for thy labour. Then said she: As far forth as I can or may, I shall fulfil your intent. And when she had thus promised him, he took her down off the tree, and led her home to his castle, and gave her the keeping of his daughter that he loved so much, and she was cherished so well, that she lay every night in the earl's chamber, and his daughter with her: and in the chamber every night there burned a lamp, which hanged between the empresses bed and the earl's bed. This lady behaved herself so gently, that she was beloved of every creature. There was at that time in the Earl's house a steward, which much loved this empress, and often spake to her of his love. But she answered him again and said, Know ye, dear friend, for a certainty, that I will never love any man in such manner-wise, but only him whom I am greatly bound to love by God's commandment.

"Then said the steward, Then thou wilt not consent unto me? Sir, quoth she, what need you any more to ask such things? The vow that I have made, I will truly keep, and hold by the grace of God.

"And when the steward heard this, he went his way

in great wrath and anger, thinking within himself, if I may, I shall be revenged on thee.

"It befel upon a night within a short time after, that the earl's chamber door was forgotten, and left unshut, which the steward had anon perceived : and when they were all asleep, he went and espied by the light of the lamp where the empress and the young maiden lay together, and with that he drew out his knife, and cut the throat of the earl's daughter and put the knife into the empresses hand, she being asleep, and nothing knowing thereof, to the intent, that when the Earl awaked he should think that she had cut his daughter's throat, and so would she be put to a shameful death for his mischievous deed *. And when the damsel was thus slain, and the bloody knife in the empresses hand, the countess awaked out of her sleep, and saw by the light of the lamp the bloody knife in the empresses hand, wherefore she was almost out of her wits, and said to the earl, O my lord, behold in yonder lady's hand a wonderful thing.

"The earl awaked, and looked toward the empresses bed ; and saw the bloody knife, as the countess had said : wherefore he was greatly moved, and cried to her, and said, Awake, woman, out of thy sleep, what thing is this that I see in thy hand : Then the em-

* This incident will remind the reader of a similar one in MACBETH.

press through his cry awaked out of her sleep, and in her waking the knife fell out of her hand, and with that she looked by her, and found the earl's daughter dead by her side, and all the bed besprinkled with blood, wherefore with an high voice she cried, and said, Alas! alas! and wo is me, my lor d's daughter is slain.

"Then cried the countess unto the earl with a piteous voice, and said, O my lord, let this devilish woman be put to the foulest death that can be thought, which thus hath slain our only child.

"Then when the countess had said thus to the earl, he said to the empress in this wise; The high God knoweth that thou mischievous woman, hast slain my daughter with thine own hands, for I saw the bloody knife in thy hand, and therefore thou shalt die a foul death. Then said the earl in this wise: O thou woman, were it not I dread God greatly, I should cleave thy body with my sword in two parts, for I delivered thee from hanging, and now thou hast slain my daughter; nevertheless, for me thou shalt have no harm, therefore go thy way out of this city, without any delay, for if I find thee here after this day, thou shalt die a most cruel death.

"Then arose this woful empress, and put on her cloaths, and after leap'd on her palfrey, and rode to-

ward the east alone without any safe conduct; and as she rode thus, mourning by the way, she espied on the left side of the way a pair of gallows, and seven officers leading a man to be hanged, wherefore she was moved with great pity, and smote her horse with her stick, and rode to them, praying that she might redeem that misdoer if he might be saved from death by any means.

"Then said they, lady, it pleaseth us well that you redeem him. Anon the empress accorded with them and paid his ransom, and he was delivered.

"Then said she to him: Now my good friend be true unto me till thou die, sith I have delivered thee from death.

"On my soul (quoth he) I promise you ever to be true. And when he had thus said, he followed the lady still, till they came nigh a city, and then said the empress to him: Good friend, quoth she, go forth thy way afore me into the city, and see thou take up for us an honest lodging, for there I purpose to rest awhile. Her man went forth as she commanded, and took up her a good lodging, and an honest, where she abode a long time. When the men of the city perceived her beauty, they wondered greatly; wherefore many of them craved of her un-

lawful love, but all was in vain, for they might not speed in any wise.

"It fortuned after upon a day, that there came a ship full of merchandise, and arrived in the haven of that city. When the lady heard this, she said unto her servant: Go to the ship, and see if there be any cloth for my use.

"Her servant went forth to the ship whereas he found many very fine cloths: wherefore he pray'd the master of the ship, that he would come to the city and speak with his lady. The master granted him, and so the servant came home to his lady before, and warned her of the coming of the master of the ship. Soon after the master of the ship came and saluted her courteously, and the lady received him according to his degree, praying him that she might have for her money such cloth as might be profitable for her wearing. Then he granted that she should have any thing that liked her, and soon they were agreed, wherefore the servant went immediately again with the master of the ship for the cloth. And when they were both within on ship-board, the master said to the lady's servant: My dear friend, to thee I would open my mind, if I might trust to thee, and if thou help me, thou shalt have of me a great reward.

"Then answered he and said : I shall (quoth he) be sworn to thee to keep thy counsel, and fulfil thine intent as far forth as I can.

"Then said the master of the ship, I love thy lady more than I can tell thee, for her beauty and feature is so excellent, that I would give for the love of her, all the gold that I have : and if I may obtain the love of her through thy help, I will give thee whatsoever thou wilt desire of me.

"Then said the lady's servant, tell me by what means I may best help thee. Then said the master of the ship, go home to thy lady again, and tell her, that I will not deliver to thee the cloth except she come herself; and do thou but bring her to my ship, and if the wind be good and fit, then I purpose to lead her away. Thy counsel is good, quoth the lady's servant, therefore give me some reward, and I shall fulfil thy desire.

"Now when he had received his reward, he went again to the lady, and told her, that by no means the master of the ship would deliver him the cloth, except she came to him herself.

"The lady believed her servant, and went to the ship. Now when she was within the ship-board, her servant abode without.

"When the master saw that she was within the ship, and the wind was good, he drew up the sail and sailed forth.

"When the lady perceived this, thus she said to the master: O master (quoth she) what treason is this thou hast done to me? The master answered and said: certainly it is so, that I must needs * * * * espouse thee. O good sir, quoth she, I have made a vow, that I shall never do such a thing * * * * Soothly, quoth he, if you will not grant me with your good will, I will cast you out into the midst of the sea, and there shall ye die an evil death: If it be so, quoth she, that I must needs consent, or else die, first I pray thee to prepare a private place in the end of the ship, whereas I may fulfil thine intent ere I die, and also I pray thee, that I may say my prayers unto the father of heaven, that he may have mercy on me.

"The master believed her, wherefore he did ordain her a cabbin in the end of the ship, wherein she kneeled down on both her knees and made her prayers, saying on this wise: O thou my Lord God, thou hast kept me from my youth in cleanness, keep me now * * * * * so that I may ever serve thee with a clean heart and mind, and let not this wicked

man prevail with me, nor any other the like wickedness come nigh me. When she had ended her prayers, there arose suddenly a great tempest in the sea, so that the ship all brast, and all that were therein perished, save the lady; and she caught a cable and saved herself, and the master caught a board of the ship and saved himself, likewise; nevertheless, she knew not of him, nor he of her, for they were driven to divers coasts. The lady landed in her own empire near to a rich city, wherein she was honourably received, and she lived so holy a life, that God gave her grace and power to heal sick folk of all manner of diseases; wherefore there came much people to her, both crooked, blind, and lame, and every man through the grace of God, and her good endeavour was healed, wherefore her name was known thro' diuers regions. Nevertheless, she was not known as the empress. At the same time the emperor's brother, that had hanged her before by the hair, was smitten with a foul leprosie. The knight that slew the earl's daughter, and put the bloody knife in her hand, was blind, deaf, and had the palsie. The thief that betrayed her to the master of the ship, was lame and full of the cramp and the master of the ship distraught of his wits.

"When the emperor heard that so holy a woman

was in the city, he called his brother, and said to him thus: Go we dear brother unto this holy woman that is dwelling in this city, that she may heal thee of thy leprosie. Would to God, O noble brother (quoth he) that I were healed. Anon the emperor with his brother went toward the city. Then when the citizens heard of his coming, they received him honourably with procession and all provision befitting his estate. And then the emperor enquired of the citizens, if any such holy woman were among them, that could heal sick folk of their diseases. The citizens answered and said, that such an one there was. Now at the same time, was come to the same city, the knight that slew the earl's daughter, and the thief which she saved from the gallows, and the master of the ship, to be healed of their diseases.

"Then was the empress called forth before the emperor, but she muffled her face as well as she could, that the emperor her husband should not know her, and when she had so done, she saluted him with great reverence, as appertained to his state; and again he in like manner, saying thus: O good lady, if thou list of thy kindness to heal my brother of his leprosie, ask of me what you will, and I shall grant it thee for thy reward.

"When the empress heard this, she looked about her, and saw there the emperor's brother, a foul leper; she saw there also the knight that slew the earl's daughter, blind and deaf, the thief that she saved from the gallows lame, and also the master of the ship distraught out of his wits, and all were come to her to be healed of their maladies, and knew her not; but though they knew her not, she knew them well. Then said she unto the emperor thus: My reverend lord, though you would give me all your empire, I cannot heal your brother, nor none of these other, except they acknowledge openly what great evil they have done.

"When the emperor heard this, he turned him towards his brother, and said unto him: brother, acknowledge openly thy sin before all these men, that thou mayest be healed of thy sickness. Then anon he began to tell how he had led his life, but he told not how he had hanged the empress in the forrest by the hair of the head most despitefully.

"When he had acknowledged all that him list, the empress replied, and said: Soothly my Lord, I would gladly lay unto him my medicine, but I wot right well it is in vain, for he hath not made a full confession.

"The emperor hearing this, he turned towards his brother, and said in this wise: What evil, sorrow, or other unhappy wretchedness is in thee? Seest thou not how that thou art a foul leper? therefore acknowledge thy sin truly, that thou mayest be whole, or else avoid my company for evermore.

"Ah my lord, quoth he, I may not tell my life openly, except I be sure of thy grace. What hast thou trespassed against me, said the emperor? Then answered his brother, and said: Mine offence against thee is grievous, and therefore I heartily ask thee forgiveness. The emperor thought not on the empress, forasmuch as he supposed she had been dead many years before; therefore he commanded his brother to tell forth wherein he had offended him, and he should be forgiven.

"When the emperor had thus forgiven his brother, he began to tell openly how he had desired the empress to commit adultery with him, and because she denied, he had hanged her by the hair, in the forrest, on such a day.

"When the emperor heard this, he was almost beside himself, and in his rage he said thus: O thou wretched creature, the vengeance of God is fallen upon thee, and were it not that I have pardoned

thee, thou shouldest die the most shameful death that could be thought.

"Then said the knight that slew the earl's daughter, I wot not quoth he, what lady you mean, but I wot that my lord found on a time such a lady hanging in the forrest, and brought her home to his castle, and he took her, and gave her his daughter to keep, and I provoked her as much as I could to sin with me, but she would in no wise consent to me; wherefore I slew the earl's daughter that lay with her, and when I had so done, I put the bloody knife in the lady's hand, that the earl should think that she had slain his daughter with her own hand, and then she was exiled thence, but where she became I wot not.

"Then said the thief, I wot not of what lady you mean; but well I wot, that seven officers were leading me to the gallows, and such a lady came riding by, and bought me of them, and then went I with her, and betrayed her unto the master of the ship.

"Such a lady, quoth the master of the ship, received I, and when we were in the midst of the sea, I would have lain with her, but she kneeled down to her prayers, and anon there arose such a tempest, that the ship all to brast, and all therein was drown-

ed, save she and I, but afterward what befell of her I wot not.

"Then cried the empress with a loud voice, and said: Soothly dear friends, ye do now truly confess and declare the truth, wherefore I will now apply my medicine, and anon they received their healths.

"When the lady the empress had thus done, she uncovered her face to the emperor, and he forthwith knew her, and ran to her, and embraced her in his arms, and kissed her oftentimes, and for joy he wept bitterly: saying, Blessed be God, now I have found that I desired. And when he had thus said, he led her home to the palace with great joy; and after, when it pleased Almighty God, they ended both their lives in peace and rest."

"Occleve has related this story in verse, from the present work, (MS. Reg. 17 D. vi.) and it is also to be found in the *Patrañas* of Timonida. (Patr. 21.) The outline has been borrowed from one of the *Contes devots*, or miracles of the Virgin Mary [1]. The incident of the bloody knife occurs likewise in Chaucer's *Man of Law's Tale*, and in a story related by Gower, *Confessio Amantis*, fol. 32."—Douce.

1 See Vincent of Beauvais. Spec. Theol. Let. viii. cap. 90. 91

A few additional remarks upon the stories to follow, for which indulgence is bespoke, shall close, what I fear the reader may be disposed to consider, as toilsome a march as the doughty knights of old experienced, in gaining access to some enchanted castle. But let me whisper in his ear, that the distressed damsels whom his intrepidity shall relieve, are most of them passing fair, and gentle. He cannot display resolution in a better cause; and if *(de gustibus non est disputandum!)* their beauty sometimes disappoint his expectations, let him remember, that adoration has been offered them by past ages of heroic spirits: that bards, whose names are familiar in our mouths, as household words, have condescended to adopt them; and therefore, that they possess an undoubted claim to public consideration, if not on the ground of their own intrinsic excellence.

Much of the merit of these fables, consists in the curious and interesting light which they throw upon a period, necessarily involved in great obscurity. The fictions are strongly and vividly delineated; and the reader feels himself hurried back into the romantic scenes of chivalrous emprize; and busily mingling in the commotions of camp and court. The fantastic regulations of many of the tales, accord with historical notices of chivalry; in which the most ridiculous commands were imposed and executed. The sports of the field, united with the pursuit of wild adventure: love, and war, and devotion; absurd penances for unimaginable crimes, and carelessness for the commission of enormous ones, form no small part of the present compilation. Every natural phenomenon is a miracle; and construed as best may serve the interests, or accord with the prejudices of the party. The

first object is to espouse some ineffably fair daughter; whose affections are disposed of, not according to the common *excellent* system of policy, or power, or wealth; but by the simple and singularly efficacious method of resolving certain mysteries; in expounding riddles, or in compliance with some inexplicable vow. If this should be considered no very favourable account of what the reader may look for, it should be remembered, that the tales in question, are faithful representations of other days; and that the character with which the period is impressed, tolerates and justifies many absurdities. Yet are we not to suppose every thing absurd which now appears so. The progress of civilization has introduced a vast number of unnecessary refinements, at which our ancestors would laugh; perhaps more boisterously, but with as much regard to *justice*, as their politer de-

scendants exhibit at the inartifical character of earlier times.

Ignorance is always credulous; and therefore, in considering the probability or improbability of the fable, we must consider how it was calculated to impress those for whom it was invented, or to whom it was told. If the narrator suited his contrivance to the understanding, and communicated pleasure to the imagination of *his* readers or auditors, he possessed the requisite ingenuity; and his merit was proportionably great. We ought not to make our own, the standard of others' judgments; much less, ought we to impose our own age and nation, as the criterion of past times and foreign countries. Comparatively secluded as the monks at all times were, their views of life must necessarily have been confined also; and their simplicity would easily be duped by those who were interested in de-

ceiving them. From the pulpit, whence it would appear that their stories were delivered, the opportunity of adding new fictions, for the purpose of illustrating new positions, would be irresistible; and here we trace the source of many of the strained allusions which so repeatedly occur. The good old custom likewise, of enlivening a winter's evening by the relation of *fabliaux*, accompanied, no doubt, by *moral and mystical applications*, gives us a delightful picture of the social intercourse and familiarity of remote times; but discovers to us another incentive to extravagant fancy, and high-flown conceit. The attention of their hearers could only be rivetted by the marvellous; and that which was barely *probable*, from the constant recurrence of extravagant fiction—from the itching ears, which opened only to the wildest exaggeration, naturally became no longer acceptable, because

taste was vitiated, and the imagination over-wrought. All these cirumstances require consideration in forming a judgment of the ensuing tales. They certainly vary in point of merit; but many of them are eminently beautiful. Some display a rich vein of pathos; and there are passages of deep poetic interest. In the description of manners, however, they are unrivalled; and my aim has been, to render passages of this kind with all fidelity; while, in the diction, I have adhered as closely as possible to that simplicity of style, which forms the principal charm of ancient narrative.

In perusing the conversational parts, the reader who has pored over illuminated manuscripts, will recal subjects to which they apply. He will recollect fair ladies glittering in every colour of the rainbow, chattering from a window to grotesque-looking gentle-

men with pink feathers drooping from immense hats; and misshapen shoes, vying in the longitude of their peaks with a barber's pole: he will be reminded of grim-visaged emperors ornamented with royal beards, and projecting jaws—in short, he will distinguish the whole of what these volumes delineate. There is in the British Museum a beautiful manuscript of the "Romant de la Rose," which will, in most respects, exemplify my observations.

It would appear that hospitality was a never-failing virtue; and the eagerness with which pilgrims and way-faring persons were invited to share the repast, and partake the couch of the friendly citizen; or to occupy the castle of the knight, is a pleasing trait in the character of the times. But it will be thought, that wisdom was a scarce commodity, when three prudential maxims were va-

lued at a thousand florins. [See Tale XXIII. Vol. 2.] Considering the result, they were cheaply purchased; although, in these days, when advice is much oftener given than paid for—even with thanks, the price may be deemed somewhat of the highest.

The many stories on the subject of adultery, seem to indicate a bad moral state of society at the time they were written; and it is to be feared that the lawless feeling which chivalry in its decline exhibited, affords an unhappy confirmation. Whether the fact of the monks levelling much of their satire against the fair sex is also corroborative; or whether it proceed from that impotence of mind, which being itself fretted by circumstance, would gladly efface or deteriorate whatever is the object of its unavailing wishes, I do not take upon me to decide.

It is necessary that I should advertise the

reader of what he will not fail to perceive, that the tales are not always perfect in every part; nor are the positions laid down at the commencement always remembered. This may result from ignorant transcribers having omitted some passages, and interpolated others; and such a supposition accounts, as I observed before, for the numerous variations which appear in various copies, as well as for the introduction of certain expressions that have been considered arguments in behalf of their origin. That they have been collected from all countries, and at many times, I have no doubt. Some appear of Italian construction, a few German, but the greater part oriental. The absolute power of the emperors, who sport with life and death in the most capricious and extraordinary manner—the constant introduction of the leprosy and crucifixion, amply confirm their connection with the East.

"It may not be thought impertinent to close this discourse with a remark on the MORALISATIONS subjoined to the stories of the GESTA ROMANORUM. This was an age of vision and mystery: and every work was believed to contain a double, or secondary, meaning. Nothing escaped this eccentric spirit of refinement and abstraction; and, together with the Bible, as we have seen, not only the general history of ancient times was explained allegorically, but even the poetical fictions of the classics were made to signify the great truths of religion, with a degree of boldness, and a want of discrimination, which, in another age, would have acquired the character of the most profane levity, if not of absolute impiety, and can only be defended from the simplicity of the state of knowledge which then prevailed.

"Thus, God creating man of clay, animated

with the vital principle of respiration, was the story of Prometheus, who formed a man of similar materials, to which he communicated life by fire stolen from heaven. Christ twice born, of his Father, God, and of his mother, Mary, was prefigured by Bacchus, who was first born of Semele, and afterwards of Jupiter. And as Minerva sprung from the brain of Jupiter, so Christ proceeded from God without a mother. Christ born of the Virgin Mary was expressed in the fable of Danäe shut within a tower, through the covering of which Jupiter descended in a shower of gold, and begat Perseus. Actæon, killed by his own hounds, was a type of the persecution and death of our Saviour. The poet Lycophron relates, that Hercules, in returning from the adventure of the golden fleece, was shipwrecked; and that being devoured by a monstrous fish, he was disgorged alive on the

shore after three days. Here was an obvious symbol of Christ's resurrection. John Waleys, an English Franciscan of the thirteenth century, in his moral exposition of Ovid's Metamorphoses, affords many other instances equally ridiculous; and who forgot that he was describing a more heterogeneous chaos, than that which makes so conspicuous a figure in his author's exordium, and which combines, amid the monstrous and indigested aggregate of its unnatural associations,

——— Sine pondere habentia pondus.

"At length, compositions professedly allegorical, with which that age abounded, were resolved into allegories for which they were never intended. In the famous ROMAUNT OF THE ROSE, written about the year 1310,

* Mit. L. i. 20.

the poet couches the difficulties of an ardent lover in attaining the object of his passion, under the allegory of a rose, which is gathered in a delicious but almost inaccessible garden. The theologists proved this rose to be the white rose of Jericho, the new Jerusalem, a state of grace, divine wisdom, the holy Virgin, or eternal beatitude, at none of which obstinate heretics can ever arrive. The chemists pretended, that it was the philosopher's stone; the civilians, that it was the most consummate point of equitable decision; and the physicians, that it was the infallible panacea. In a word, other professions, in the most elaborate commentaries, explained away the lover's rose into the mysteries of their own respective science. In conformity to this practice, Tasso allegorized his own poem; and a flimsy structure of morality was raised on the chimerical conceptions of Ariosto's

Orlando. In the year 1577, a translation of a part of Amadis de Gaule appeared in France; with a learned preface, developing the valuable stores of profound instruction, concealed under the naked letters of the old romances, which were discernible only to the intelligent, and totally unperceived by common readers; who, instead of plucking the fruit, were obliged to rest contented with *le simple* Fleur *de la Lecture litterale.* Even Spenser, at a later period, could not indulge his native impulse to descriptions of chivalry, without framing such a story, as conveyed, under the *dark conceit* of ideal champions, a set of historic transactions, and an exemplification of the nature of the twelve moral virtues. He presents his fantastic queen with a rich romantic mirrour, which shewed the wondrous achievements of her magnificent ancestry.

'And thou, O fairest princess under sky,
In this fayre mirrour maist behold thy face,
And thine own realmes in lond of Faëry,
And in this antique image thy great ancestry *.'

"It was not, however, solely from an unmeaning and a wanton spirit of refinement, that the fashion of resolving every thing into allegory, so universally prevailed. The same apology may be offered for cabalistical interpreters, both of the classics and of the old romances. The former, not willing that those books should be quite exploded which contained the ancient mythology, laboured to reconcile the apparent absurdities of the pagan system to the Christian mysteries, by demonstrating a figurative resemblance. The latter, as true learning began to dawn, with a view of supporting for a while the expiring credit of giants and magicians, were com-

* B. ii. Introd. St. vi.

pelled to palliate those monstrous incredibilities, by a bold attempt to unravel the mystic web which had been wove by fairy hands, and by shewing that truth was hid under the gorgeous veil of Gothic invention *."

* WARTON. *Introductory Disser.* See Hist. of E. Poetry. Vol. 3. p. xciv. *et seq.* I cannot omit observing here, that in the opinions which I have hazarded, I am led by no presumptuous feeling to condemn those who think differently. I deprecate every suspicion to the contrary. While I am anxious to elucidate and establish my own sentiments, I retain the utmost respect and deference for those whose research, judgment, critical acumen and ability, there is little merit in frankly avowing. And I take this opportunity of acknowledging the assistance I have derived from the invaluable labors of Mr. Douce, and Mr. Ellis—not to mention a fund of information from Mr. Warton, which the reader will readily observe. The latter writer, whose inaccuracies have been the theme of every pen, it seems to me, has not been justly appreciated. That he is frequently incorrect is certain—but he is blamed by those, who have not repaired his deficiencies, while they have forgot the difficulty of his undertaking, and the impossibility of preventing typographical errors in a work of such extent. A slight blunder, which I should think must have been unintentional, (*Isumbras* for *Ippotis*) causes Ritson to accuse him of an "*Infamous lie!*" See Diss. on Romance and Minstrelsy; *passim.*

GESTA ROMANORUM.

TALE I.

OF LOVE.

POMPEY * was a wise and powerful king. He had an only daughter, remarkable for her beauty, of whom he was extremely fond. He committed her to the custody of five soldiers; and charged them, under the heaviest penalties, to preserve her from every possible in-

* The fair Reader who has not condescended to notice my *prolegomena* (and I hope the suspicion is not treasonable !) may require to be informed that "GESTA ROMANORUM" supplies a very inadequate idea of the contents of these volumes. The Romans have little to do in the matter, and *King Pompey* must not be confounded with Pompey the Great, though they are unquestionably meant for the same person. Such blunders are perpetual.

jury. The soldiers were on guard night and day; and before the door of her bed-chamber, they suspended a burning lamp, that the approach of an intruder might be the more easily detected. And, to omit no means of security, a dog, whose watchfulness was unremitting, and whose bark was clamorous and piercing, maintained its station near the threshold of the apartment. From all these circumstances, it would appear, that every precaution had been taken: but, unhappily, the lady panted for the pleasures of the world. She longed to mingle in the busy scenes of life, and to gaze upon its varied shows. As she was one day looking abroad, a certain duke passed by, who regarded her with impure and improper feelings. Observing her beauty, and ascertaining that she was the reputed heir to the throne, he became enamoured; and used numerous devices to accomplish his treacherous designs. He promised her every species of gratification; and at length prevailed with her to overturn the lamp, destroy the guardian dog which had protected her, and elope with him, during the night.

In the morning, however, enquiries were set on foot; and messengers despatched in pursuit of her. Now there was at that time in the Emperor's palace, a champion of remarkable prowess, and with whom the execution of justice was never dilatory. When he understood the contempt and ingratitude which the lady had exhibited towards her parent, he armed himself, and hastened after the fugitives. A battle speedily ensued, in which the champion triumphed, and decapitated the seducer on the spot. The lady he conveyed back to the palace; but being refused admittance to the presence of her father, thenceforward she passed her time in bitterly bewailing her misdeeds. It happened that a wise person in the Emperor's court heard of her repentance. On all occasions when his services were required, he had proved himself an active mediator between majesty and its offenders; and being now moved with compassion, he reconciled her to her indignant parent, and betrothed her to a powerful nobleman. He afterwards made her several valuable presents. In the first place, he presented a tunic, which extended to the

heel, composed of the finest and richest woof, having the following inscription :—" I have raised thee up, be not again cast down." From the Emperor she received a golden coronet, bearing the legend, " Thy dignity is from me." The champion, who had conquered in her behalf, gave a ring, on which was sculptured, " I have loved thee, do thou return that love." The mediator also bestowed a ring, inscribed as follows, " What have I done? How much? Why?" Another ring was presented by the King's son; and there was engraved upon it, " Thou art noble; despise not thy nobility." Her own brother bestowed a similar gift, of which the motto ran thus :—" Approach; fear not—I am thy brother." Her husband likewise added a golden signet, which confirmed his wife's inheritance, and bore this superscription, " Now thou art espoused, be faithful."

The penitent lady received these various presents with gratitude, and kept them as long as she lived. She succeeded in regaining the favor of those whose affections her former conduct had alienated, and closed her days in peace. (1)

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the Emperor is our *Heavenly Father,* who hath drawn away his children from the jaws of the devil by the sufferings of his blessed Son. He is the King of kings, and Lord of lords. *Deut.* xxxii. "Is he not thy Father who hath obtained thee by conquest, made, and established thee?" The only daughter is the *human soul,* which is delivered to five soldiers, that is, to the *five senses,* to guard; being armed by powers received in baptism. These senses are, sight, hearing, &c. which have in charge to preserve it from the devil, the world, and the flesh. The burning lamp is the *will,* subjected in all things to the control of God, and which in good works should shine out brilliantly, dispersing the gloom of sin. The barking dog is *Conscience,* which has to struggle against error; but, alas! the soul, desirous of gazing upon the objects of this world, looks abroad as often as it acts contrary to the divine command; and then is willingly seduced by a duke—that is, by the *Infernal Ravisher.*

And thus, the lamp of good works is extinguished, and the dog of conscience destroyed: and thus, the soul follows the devil in the dark night of sin. These things, when our champion had heard, namely, God—because, "there is no other that fights for us, but only Thou, our God,"—instantly he combats with that wicked mis-leader the devil, gains a victory, and leads the soul to the palace of the heavenly King. The wise mediator is Christ; as the apostle says, 1 *Tim.* ii. "There is one mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus." The son of the king is Christ. So the Psalmist witnesses—"Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee." Christ is also our brother. *Gen.* xxxvii. "He is our brother." And he is our spouse, according to that of Hosea ii. "I will marry thee in faithfulness." Again, "Thou shalt be the spouse of my blood." By him, we are reconciled to our heavenly Father, and restored to peace. "For he is our peace, who hath made both one." *Ephes.* ii. From him we received the aforesaid gifts: first, a cloak descending to the ancle—that is, his most precious skin; (2) and said to be of

delicate texture, because it was woven with stripes, blood, bruises, and other various instances of malice. Of which texture, nothing more is meant than this—" I have raised thee up," because I have *redeemed* thee; do not throw thyself into further evil. " Go," said our Lord, " and sin no more." This is the vest of Joseph—the garment dyed in the blood of a goat. *Gen.* xxxvii. That same Christ our King, gave to us an all glorious crown; that is, when he submitted to be crowned for our sakes. And of a truth, " Thy dignity is from me"—even from that crown. John xix. " Jesus went forth, bearing the crown of thorns." Christ is our *champion,* who gave us a ring—that is, the hole in his right hand; and we ourselves may perceive how faithfully it is written—" I have loved thee, do thou also love." Rev. i. " Christ our mediator loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood." He gave us another ring, which is the puncture in his left hand, where we see written, " What have I done? how much? why?"—" What have I done?" I have despoiled myself, receiving the form of a ser-

vant. "How much?" I have made God and man. "Why?" To redeem the lost. Concerning these three—Zachary xiii. "What are the wounds in the middle of thy hands? And he answered, saying, I am wounded by these men in their house, who loved me." Christ is our brother, and son of the eternal King. He gave us a third ring—to wit, the hole in his right foot; and what can be understood by it, except, "Thou art noble, despise not thy nobility?" In like manner, Christ is our *brother-german.* And he gave us a fourth ring, the puncture in his left foot, on which is written, "Approach; fear not—I am thy brother." Christ is also our *spouse;* he gave us a signet, with which he confirmed our inheritance: that is, the wound made in his side by the spear, on account of the great love, with which he loved us. And what can this signify but "Thou art now joined to me through mercy; sin no more."

Let us study, my beloved, so to keep the gifts of the world, that we may be able to exclaim, as in St. Matthew, "Lord, thou gavest

to me five talents;" and thus, unquestionably, we shall reign in the bosom of bliss. That we may be thought worthy the Father, Son, &c.

TALE II.

OF MERCY.

The Emperor Titus made a law, that whosoever provided not for his parents, should be condemned to death. It happened that there were two brethren, descended from the same father. One of them had a son who discovered his uncle in the greatest indigence; and immediately, in compliance with the law, but in opposition to the will of his father, administered to his wants. Thereupon the father expelled him from his house. Notwithstanding he still maintained his poor uncle, and supplied him with every requisite. By and by,

the uncle became rich and the father indigent. Now, when the son beheld the altered circumstances of his parent, he liberally supported him also, to the great indignation of his uncle, who drove him from his house, and said—"Formerly, when I was poor, thou gavest me support, in opposition to thy father; for which, I constituted thee my heir, in the place of a son. But an ungrateful son ought not to obtain an inheritance; and rather than such, we should adopt a stranger. Therefore, since *thou* hast been ungrateful to thy father in maintaining me contrary to his command, thou shalt never possess my inheritance." The son thus answered his uncle. "No one can be punished for executing what the law commands and compels. Now the law of nature obliges children to assist their parents in necessity, and especially to honour them: therefore, I cannot justly be deprived of the inheritance."

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the two brothers are the *Son of God* and the *world,* which both proceed from

one heavenly Father. The first, begotten; the second, created. Between them, from the beginning, discord arose, and continues to this day; so that he who is the friend of the one, is an enemy to the other. According to *St. James* iv. "Whosoever would become the friend of this world, shall be accounted an enemy to God." The only son is every *Christian*, who is the progeny of Christ, because he is descended from him by faith. Therefore, we should not feed fat the world with pride, avarice, and other vices, if we would be the children of God. And if our desires are contrary, too surely we shall be excluded from the family of Christ, and lose our heavenly inheritance. If we maintain and cherish Christ by works of love and of piety, the world indeed will abhor us—but better is it to be at enmity with the world than forego an inheritance in Heaven.

TALE III.

OF JUST JUDGMENT.

A CERTAIN emperor decreed, that if any woman were taken in adultery, she should be cast headlong from a very high precipice. It chanced that a woman, convicted of the crime, was immediately conveyed to the place of punishment, and thrown down. But she received no injury in the fall. They, therefore, brought her back to the judgment-seat; and when the judge perceived that she was unharmed, he commanded that she should again be led to the precipice, and the sentence effectually executed. The woman, however, addressing the judge, said, "My Lord, if you command this, you will act contrary to the law, which punishes not twice for the same

fault. I have already been cast down as a convicted adultress, but God miraculously preserved me. Therefore, I ought not to be subjected to it again." The judge answered, "Thou hast well said; go in peace:" and thus was the woman saved.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the emperor, is God, who made a law that if any one polluted the soul (which is the spouse of Christ) by the commission of any mortal sin, he should be precipitated from a high mountain—that is, from Heaven; as befell our first parent, Adam. But God, by the sufferings of his Son, hath preserved us. When man sins, God does not instantly condemn him, because His mercy is infinite; but "by grace we are saved," and not cast headlong into hell.

TALE IV.

OF JUSTICE.

During the reign of Cæsar a law was enacted, that if a man maltreated a woman, and overcame her by violence, it should remain with the aggrieved party, whether the person so offending should be put to death, or married to her, without a portion. Now it fell out that a certain fellow violated two women upon the same night; the one of whom sought to put him to death, and the other to be married to him. The violator was apprehended and brought before the judge, to answer respecting the two women, according to law. The first woman insisting upon her right, desired his death; while the second claimed him for her husband, and said to the first, "It is true, the law grants you your request, but at the same time, it supports me in mine. But

because my demand is of less importance, and more charitable, I doubt not but that sentence will be given in my favor." Both women complained, and both required the enforcement of the law. When either side had been heard, the judge ordered that the second woman should obtain her husband. And so it was done.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the emperor, who framed the law, is our LORD JESUS CHRIST. The violator, any *sinner,* who violates two females, that is, Justice and Mercy, which are both the daughters of God. The violator is brought before the Judge, when the soul separates from the body. The first woman, that is, Justice, alleges against the sinner that by law he is subject to eternal death: but the other, that is, Divine Mercy, alleges that by contrition and confession he may be saved. Therefore let us study to please God.

TALE V.

OF FIDELITY.

The subject of a certain king fell into the hands of pirates, and wrote to his father for ransom. But the father would not redeem him; so the youth wasted away in prison. Now he who detained him in chains had a daughter of great beauty and virtue. She was at this time in her twentieth year, and frequently visited the young man with the hope of alleviating his griefs. But he was too disconsolate to hearken. At length, after some time had passed in this manner, believing her prejudiced in his favor, and disposed to succour him, he asked her to obtain his freedom. She replied, "But how am I to effect it? Thy father, thine own father will not ransom thee: on what ground then should I, a stranger, attempt it? And suppose that I were induced to do so, I should incur the wrath of my pa-

rent, because thine denies the price of thy redemption. Nevertheless, on one condition thou shalt be liberated." "Amiable creature," returned he, "impose what thou wilt; so that it be possible, I will accomplish it." "Promise, then," said she, "to marry me, whenever an opportunity may occur." "I promise," said the youth joyfully, "and plight thee an unbroken faith." The girl immediately commenced her operations; and during her father's absence effected his release, and fled with him to his own country. When they arrived, the father of the youth welcomed him, and said, "Son, I am overjoyed at thy return; but who is the lady under thy escort?" He replied, "It is the daughter of a king, to whom I am betrothed." The father returned, "On pain of losing thy inheritance, I charge thee, marry her not." "My father," exclaimed the youth, "what hast thou said? My obligations to her are greater than they are to you; for when imprisoned and fettered by my enemy, I implored you to ransom me; but this you cruelly denied. Now she not only released me from prison, but from the

apprehensions of death—and, therefore, I am resolved to marry her." The father answered, "Son, I tell thee, that thou canst not confide in her, and consequently ought not to espouse her. She deceived her own father, when she liberated thee from prison, secretly carrying off the price of thy redemption. Therefore, I am of opinion, that thou canst not confide in her, and consequently ought ought not to espouse her. Besides, there is another reason. It is true, she liberated thee, but it was for the gratification of her passions, and in order to oblige thee to marry her. And, since an unworthy passion was the source of thy liberty, I think, that she ought not to be thy wife." When the lady heard such reasons assigned, she answered, "To your first objection, that I deceived my own parent, I reply, that it is not true. He deceives who takes away or diminishes a certain good. But my father is so rich that he needs not any addition. When, therefore, I had maturely weighed this matter, I procured the young man's freedom. And if my father had received a ransom for him, he had been

but little richer; and therefore cannot be much impoverished by the want of it. Now, in acting thus, I have served you, who refused the ransom, and have done no injury to my parent. As for your last objection, that an unworthy passion urged me to do this, I assert that it is false. Feelings of such a nature arise either from great personal beauty or from wealth, or honors; or finally, from a robust appearance. None of which qualities your son possessed. For imprisonment had destroyed his beauty; and he had not sufficient wealth even to effect his liberation; while much anxiety had worn away his strength, and left him emaciated and sickly. Therefore, compassion rather persuaded me to free him." When the father had heard this, he could object nothing more. So his son married the lady with very great pomp, and closed his life in peace. (3)

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the son captured by pirates, is the whole *human race*, led by the sin of our first parent into the prison of the devil—that

is, into his power. The father who would not redeem him, is the *world,* which aids not man's escape from the evil one, but rather loves to retain him in thraldom. The daughter who visited him in prison, is the *Divinity* of Christ united to the soul ; who sympathised with the human species—and who, after his passion, descended into hell and freed us from the chains of the devil. But the celestial Father has no occasion for wealth, because He is infinitely rich and good. Therefore, Christ, moved with compassion, came down from Heaven to visit us, and took upon himself our form, and required no more than to be united in the closest bonds with man. So Hosea ii. " I will marry her to me in faithfulness." But our father, the *world,* whom many obey, ever murmurs and objects to this. " If thou unitest thyself to God, thou shalt lose my inheritance"—that is, the inheritance of this world; because, it is " impossible to serve God and mammon." Matt. vi.—" He who shall leave father, or mother, or wife, or country, for my sake, he shall receive an hundred fold and possess everlasting life."

Which may Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, vouchsafe to bestow upon us; who with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, liveth and reigneth for ever and ever. Amen.

TALE VI.

OF FOLLOWING REASON.

A CERTAIN emperor, no less tyrannical than powerful, espoused a very beautiful girl, the daughter of a king. After the ceremony was concluded, each solemnly vowed that the death of the one should be followed by the voluntary destruction of the other. It happened not many days after, that the emperor went into a far country, and continued there a long time. Being desirous of proving the fidelity of his wife, he directed a messenger to inform her that he was dead. When this in-

telligence was communicated, she remembered the oath which had been administered, and precipitated herself from a lofty mountain, with an intention to die. But she received little injury, and in a short space was restored to health. Her father understanding this, forbade obedience to the mandate and oath prescribed by her husband. Still, as she seemed anxious to comply with them, the father said, " If you refuse assent to my request, quit the palace with all haste." But she replied, " I will not do that; and I will prove, by good reasons, my right to remain. When an oath is sworn, ought it not to be faithfully maintained? I have sworn to my husband, that I would destroy myself, if I survived him: therefore, it is no delinquency to fulfil my vow, and I ought not to be driven from your palace. Moreover, no one should be punished for that which is commendable. Now, since man and woman are one flesh, according to the laws of God, it is commendable for a wife to perish with her husband. On which account, there was a law in India, that a wife after the decease of her lord, should

burn herself as evidence of her grief and love; or else be deposited alive, in his sepulchre. And therefore I think that it is no error to kill myself for the love of my husband." The father answered, "When you said that you were bound by an oath, you should have reremembered that such an obligation is not binding, because its end is deprivation of life. An oath should always be consistent with reason; and therefore your's being unreasonable is of no force. As for the other argument, that it is praise-worthy in a wife to die with her husband, it avails you not. For although they are one in the body, united by carnal affections, yet they are two persons in soul, and are really and substantially different. Therefore, neither does this afford any resource." When the lady heard these words, she could argue no farther, but complied with the request of her parent. She refrained from soliciting destruction; but though apprized of her husband's existence soon after, she neither returned to, nor forgave him.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the emperor is the *devil.* The girl is the *soul* created in the likeness of God, but by sin espoused to the evil one. Wherefore, in the commission of sin, there is a covenant established, namely, that if a man die in sin and in remote parts—that is, in hell, it is previously agreed upon by his own pride, that the sinning soul should cast itself from a high mountain—that is, from heaven down to hell: and thus it was, before the advent of our Saviour. But He, by his passion, re-instated it in health. Notwithstanding, the soul still desires to precipitate itself, as often as it acts against the divine command. But God, who is our *Father*, would not willingly that we should fall, but had rather, by contrition and confession, receive us wholly to Himself, and bind us so firmly to Him, that with Him we might enjoy everlasting life.

TALE VII.

OF THE ENVY OF BAD MEN TOWARDS THE GOOD.

When Diocletian was emperor, there was a certain noble soldier who had two sons, whom he entirely and truly loved. The younger of them married a harlot, without the knowledge of his father, and the infamy of this proceeding overwhelmed him with the greatest grief. He sternly banished him from his presence, and left him to the rebukes of conscience, and to the agonies of approaching want. Nevertheless, his family increased; and a beautiful but sickly child added to their necessity and despair. In this situation he despatched a messenger to his parent, to supplicate relief; and when his wretchedness was made known, it moved him to compassion, and he forgave him all. After their re-

conciliation, the son entrusted to his father's protection the child that the harlot bore him, and it was taken to his house and educated as his own. But when the elder brother heard what had happened, he was exceedingly wroth, and said to his father, "Thou art mad, and I will prove it by satisfactory reasons. He is mad who fosters and adopts a son by whom he has been grievously wronged. Now my brother, whose son that child is, did you great injury when he espoused a harlot contrary to your will. Therefore, I am persuaded that you are mad—for you both protect the child, and are at peace with him." Here the father answered, "Son, I am reconciled to thy brother, in consequence of his own contrition, and the urgent entreaties of his friends. Therefore, it becomes me to love my recovered son more than you; because, you have often offended me, but never sought a reconciliation: and since you have not humbly acknowledged your transgressions, you are more ungrateful than your brother has been, whom you would have me banish from my house. You ought rather to rejoice that he is reconciled to me.

But because you have exhibited so much ingratitude, you shall not receive the inheritance designed for you. It shall be given to your brother."—And so it was done. (5)

APPLICATION.

My beloved, by this father, we are to understand our *heavenly Father*: by the two sons, the angelic and human nature. The human nature was united with a harlot,—that is, with *humanity*, when it ate the fatal apple, contrary to the Divine injunction. Wherefore, it was banished by the heavenly Father. The son of the harlot, is *mankind*, which had perished in its perverseness but for the paternal regard. And it is described as sickly, because being the fruit of sin, it is placed in a valley of tears. As in *Gen.* iii.—"By the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread." But he, by the passion of Christ is reconciled to God the Father, and fully established by the good offices and prayers of holy men, who daily pour forth their petitions to heaven, for all the world. So the Psalmist, "They ask that which they

desire." But the other brother, namely, the *devil* (who is the father of ingratitude) continually attacks us, and murmurs at our reconciliation; alleging that we ought not to obtain our heavenly inheritance because of original sin. But doubtless if we live a holy and pure life in this world, his allegation will nothing avail; nay, we shall obtain his portion—that is, the place which he has lost in heaven.

TALE VIII.

OF FALSE ALLEGATIONS.

When the emperor Leo reigned, his chief pleasure consisted in a beautiful face. Wherefore, he caused three female images to be made, to which he dedicated a stately temple, and commanded all his subjects to worship them. The first image stretched out its hand

over the people, and upon one of its fingers was placed a golden ring bearing the following device: "*My finger is generous.*" The second image had a golden beard, and on its brow was written, "*I have a beard: if any one be beardless, let him come to me, and I will give him one.*" The third image had a golden cloak, and purple tunic, and on its breast appeared these words, in large golden characters. "*I fear no one.*" These three images were fabricated of stone. Now when they had been erected according to the command of the Emperor, he ordained that whosoever conveyed away either the ring, or golden beard, or cloak, should be doomed to the most disgraceful death. It so chanced that a certain fellow entering the temple, perceived the ring upon the finger of the first image, which he immediately drew off. He then went to the second, and took away the golden beard. Last of all, he came to the third image, and when he had removed the cloak, he departed from the temple. The people, seeing their images despoiled, presently communicated the robbery to the Emperor. The transgressor was

summoned before him, and charged with pilfering from the images, contrary to the edict. But he replied, "My Lord, suffer me to speak. When I entered the temple, the first image extended towards me its finger with the golden ring—as if it had said, 'Here, take the ring.' Yet, not merely because the finger was held forth to me, would I have received it; but, by and by, I read the superscription, which said, 'My finger is *generous,*—take the ring.' Whereby understanding that it was the statue's pleasure to bestow it upon me, good manners obliged me to refuse it. Afterwards, I approached the second image with the golden beard; and I communed with my own heart, and said, 'The author of this statue never had such a beard, for I have seen him repeatedly; and the creature ought, beyond question, to be inferior to the Creator. Therefore it is fitting and necessary to take away the beard.' But although she offered not the smallest opposition, yet I was unwilling to carry it off, until I distinctly perceived, 'I have a beard; if any one be beardless, let him come to me, and I will give him one.' I am beardless, as your Ma-

jesty may see, and therefore, for two especial reasons, took away the beard. The first was, that she should look more like her author, and not grow too proud of her golden beard. Secondly, that by these means, I might protect my own bald pate. Again, I came to the third image, which bore a golden cloak I took away the cloak, because, being of metal, in the winter time, it is extremely cold; and the image itself is made of stone. Now stone is naturally cold; and if it had retained the golden cloak it would have been adding cold to cold, which were a bad thing for the image. Also, if it had possessed this cloak in summer, it would have proved too heavy and warm for the season. However, I should not have borne it away even for these causes if there had not been written upon the breast, 'I fear nobody.' For I discovered in that vaunt, such intolerable arrogance, that I took away the cloak, merely to humble it." "Fair Sir," replied the Emperor, "does not the law say expressly that the images shall not be robbed, nor the ornaments upon them molested on any pretence?

You have impudently taken away that which did not belong to you, and therefore, I determine that you be instantly suspended on a gallows." And so it was done. (6)

APPLICATION.

My beloved, that Emperor is our Lord Jesus Christ. The three images are three sorts of men, in whom God takes pleasure—as it is written, "thy delight is in the sons of men." If we live piously and uprightly, God will remain with us. By the first image with extended hand, we may conceive the poor and the simple of this world; who, if they have business in the halls of princes and noblemen, will prevail but little unless the hand is put forth to present a gift. Gifts blind the eyes of a judge. But if it should be asked of such a one, or of his servants, "Why fleecest thou the poor?" it is instantly replied, "Can I not receive with a good conscience, what is voluntarily presented? If I took not the offering, people would say I was besotted;

and therefore, to curb their tongues I take it." By the second image we are to understand the rich of the world, who, by the grace of God, are exalted to great wealth. So the Psalmist: "Thou raisest the poor out of the mire, and they are accused before their rivals." Some wretched man hath a golden beard—that is, great riches, which he inherited from his father; and straightway we oppress him, either with a legal pretext or without. A just man is overborne and robbed; for they say, "We are bald," that is, we are poor; and it is fitting that he divide his riches with us: nay, he is often murdered for his property. "Covetousness," says St. Paul to Timothy, "is the root of all evil." By the third image with the golden cloak, we are to understand men raised to great dignities. Such are the prelates and princes of the earth, who are appointed to preserve the law, to cultivate virtue, and to root out vice. Wherefore, evil-doers, who refuse to submit to necessary discipline, lift themselves up, and conspire against their ecclesiastical governors and superiors, saying, "We will not have him to reign over us."

St. Luke. The Jews seeing Christ performing miracles, and proving that they had sinned against the law, immediately contrive his death. But these conspirators, and the like to them, shall die the death. Therefore, let us diligently study to correct what is amiss in this life present, that we may, &c.

TALE IX.

OF DEPRAVITY CONQUERED BY MILDNESS.

Alexander was a renowned and prudent Emperor. He married the daughter of the King of Syria, and had by her a beautiful son. The boy grew, but coming to man's estate, he conspired against his father, and continually sought his death. This conduct surprised the Emperor, and conversing with the Empress, he said, "Fair wife, tell me, I

pray thee, without reserve, hast thou ever forsaken me for another?"—"My Lord," answered his wife, "what is the purport of your question?"—"Your son," said he, "seeks my life. It amazes me; and if he were mine he could not do it."—"Heaven can witness," returned the Lady, "that I am innocent. He is truly your son, but to what end he pursues your destruction, I cannot surmise." The Emperor, satisfied on this point, spoke to his son, with the utmost mildness. "My dear son," said he, "I am your father; by my means you came into the world, and will succeed me on the throne. Why then do you desire my death? I have ever loved and cared for you, and my possessions are not less your's than mine. Cease, I conjure you, from such an iniquitous pursuit; and, in return for having given you life, curtail not the few brief hours that are assigned me." Nevertheless the son disregarded his father's entreaties, and every succeeding day discovered fresh proofs of a hard and depraved heart; sometimes endeavouring to slay him in public, and sometimes resorting to secret assassination.

When the father became aware of this, he retired into a very secluded apartment, and took with him his son. Presenting a naked sword, he said, " Take this weapon, and now hesitate not to put a speedy end to the existence of thy parent; for it will be esteemed less shameful to be slain by my own son, quietly and in secret, than to be exposed to the uproar and observation of the people." The son, struck with the enormity of what he purposed, cast aside the extended sword, and falling upon his knees, wept aloud " Oh! my father," said he, " I have done thee wrong—open and notorious wrong, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. Yet forgive me, dearest father, and once again restore me to thy forfeited love. From henceforth, I will be indeed thy son, and in all things execute thy pleasure." When the overjoyed parent heard this, he fell upon his neck, and kissed him. " Oh my beloved son, be faithful and affectionate, and thou shalt find a fond and indulgent father." He then clothed him in gorgeous apparel, and brought him to the banqueting-chamber, where he was sumptu-

ously feasted with all the nobles of his empire. The Emperor lived a short time after this, and finished his career in peace.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the Emperor is our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God. He who seeks the life of his father is any *bad Christian* who is made a legitimate child of God, by the virtues of baptism. The mother of the boy is the holy church, through which our baptismal vows are received; and through which also the perverse sinner, removed from God by manifold offences, seeks the death of Christ, who is himself the *father*, as appears from *Deut.* xxxii. "Is he not thy father," &c. Therefore, the Christian attempts to destroy Christ, as often as he departs from the law of God. Again, Christ withdraws into the innermost sanctuary, and there, not only offers his breast to the drawn sword—but has actually died for our sins. Wherefore, remembering his love, and the sources of our own security, we ought to

resist sin, and serve him faithfully. The father delivered to his son the instrument of death: so God gives to you a sword—that is, free will, either to receive his grace and love, or to reject them. Do thou therefore act as the son did: cast from thee the sword of iniquity and malice. We read in the Gospel, "The son went away into a far country." So when the sinner loves his carnal delights he wanders from the Lord. And in proportion that sin renders him unlike to God, in the same proportion he removes from him. His substance is consumed, while life and thought are clogged and degraded by base actions. Thus, as it is said of the son in the Gospel, "He began to want; and joining himself to a citizen of that country, he was placed on a farm to feed swine," &c. The son begins to want, when his virtuous feelings are overwhelmed in sin; for, as the Psalmist says, "The rich want, and are hungry." He joined himself to a citizen—namely, to the *devil;* because devils are citizens and rulers of the darkness of this world. According to the remark of the Apostle, "We do not struggle against flesh and blood," &c.

Swine are unclean animals, because they delight in filth, and therefore the devils may be compared to them, who are saturated with the filth of sin, proceeding from themselves. Refuse is the proper food of sin; thus, fornication, drunkenness, and gluttony, are the food of devils. The sinner seeks to fill his belly with such refuse, because no one supplies him with food enough, and because voluptuousness is always hungry. The devil often denies man the power of gratifying his appetite, knowing that the cup of his iniquity is full, and that he is dead in sin. Nevertheless, the Lord, by his grace, enables him to throw away the sword of vice; and the sinner then exclaims—" Pity me, O God, while thou correctest: I acknowledge my transgressions." The Almighty Being compassionates his distress, and, as it were, falls upon his neck, and kisses him. " Bring forth," he says, " the most sumptuous apparel, and clothe him; put a ring upon his finger, and shoes upon his feet. Slay likewise the fatted calf, that we may eat—for my son, which was dead, is alive again; he was lost and is found." Thus our heavenly Father,

when the repentant sinner stands awe-struck before him, falls upon his neck, kisses him, and comforts him with many words. As it is written—" He shall kiss me with the kiss of his lip." The splendid vesture is put upon him, when, as a true penitent, he entertains the love of Christ. The ring on his finger denotes the seal of Christ's similitude, manifested in good works. He, therefore, bears the ring, whose actions resemble our Lord's " labors of love." The shoes on the feet, are the living examples of departed saints. For as shoes defend the feet, so do the examples of holy men secure the soul. The fatted calf is Christ, sacrificed for our sakes upon the altar of the cross ; and *fatted,* because filled with the Holy Ghost. Let then the city of thy heart, waving over its battlements the standard of our blessed Lord, prove that it is defended by his best and bravest soldiers. It is said, that " if we love God, all things may be forgiven"—that is, if we are penitent, our errors will be done away. If we carry along with us the favor and fear of God, we shall obtain everlasting life ; to which, of His infinite mercy, may he lead us.

TALE X.

OF THE MANAGEMENT OF THE SOUL.

The Emperor Vespasian lived a long time without children; but at last, by the counsel of certain wise men, he espoused a beautiful girl, brought to him from a distant country. He afterwards travelled with her into foreign lands, and there became father of a son. In the course of time, he wished to revisit his own kingdom; but his wife obstinately refused to comply, and said, "If you leave me, I will kill myself." The Emperor, therefore, in this dilemma, constructed two rings; and upon the jewels with which they were richly ornamented, he sculptured images possessing very singular virtues. One bore an effigy of memory; and the other an effigy of oblivion. They were placed upon the apex of each ring; and that which represented oblivion he bestowed upon

his wife. The other he retained himself; and as their love had been, such was the power of the rings. The wife presently forgot her husband, and the husband cared but little for the memory of his wife. Seeing, therefore, that his object was achieved, he departed joyfully to his own dominions, and never afterwards returned to the lady. So he ended his days in peace.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, by the Emperor understand the *human soul,* which ought to return to its own country—that is, to Heaven, by which path alone it can arrive at security. Therefore, the Psalmist says—"Save me, O God," &c. The wife is our *body,* which holds the soul in sensual delights, that encumber and bar its passage to that eternal life, where the empire and hope of the soul is. And why does it so impede it? Because the flesh rebels against the spirit, and the spirit wars against the flesh. Do ye, therefore, as the Emperor did; make

two rings—the rings of memory and forgetfulness, which are prayer and fasting; for both are effective. In most countries, a ring upon the woman's finger is a token of her marriage; and when a man resigns himself to prayer and fasting, it is evidence of his being the bride of Christ. Prayer is the ring of memory, for the Apostle enjoins us to "pray without ceasing." Man, therefore, makes use of periodical prayer, that God may remember his desires; while angels themselves present and aid the petition, as we read in the book of Tobit. Fasting may be called the ring of oblivion, because it withdraws from and forgets the enticements of the flesh, that there may be no obstruction in its progress to God. Let us then study to preserve these rings and merit everlasting life.

TALE XI.

OF THE POISON OF SIN.

ALEXANDER was a prince of great power, and a disciple of Aristotle, who instructed him in every branch of polite learning. The Queen of the North having heard of his proficiency, nourished her daughter from the cradle upon a certain kind of deadly poison; and when she grew up, she was considered so beautiful, that the sight of her alone affected many with madness. The Queen sent her to Alexander to espouse. He had no sooner beheld her, than he became violently enamoured, and with much eagerness desired to possess her; but Aristotle observing his weakness, said—"Do not touch her, for if you do, you will certainly perish. She has been nurtured upon the most deleterious food, which I will prove to you imme-

diately. Here is a malefactor, who is already condemned to death. He shall be united to her, and you will soon see the truth of what I advance." Accordingly the culprit was brought without delay to the girl; and scarcely had he touched her lips, before his whole frame was impregnated with poison, and he expired in the greatest agony. Alexander, glad at his escape from such imminent destruction, bestowed all thanks on his instructor, and returned the girl to her mother. (7)

APPLICATION.

My beloved, any *good Christian,* strong and powerful in virtues communicated at his baptism, may be called Alexander. He is strong and powerful as long as he preserves his purity from the contamination of the devil, the world, and the flesh. The Queen of the North is a superfluity of the things of life, which sometimes destroys the spirit, and generally the body. The envenomed beauty, is Luxury and Gluttony, which feed men with delicacies,

that are poison to the soul. Aristotle is thy conscience, or reason, which reproves and opposes the union that would undo the soul. The malefactor is a perverse man, disobedient to his God, and more diligent in pursuing his own carnal delights, than the divine commands. He enfolds his sins in a close embrace, by whose deadly touch he is spiritually destroyed. So the book of Wisdom, "He who touches pitch shall be defiled by it." Let us then study to live honestly and uprightly, in order that we may attain to everlasting life.

TALE XII

OF BAD EXAMPLE.

In the reign of Otho there was a certain slippery priest, who created much disturbance

among his parishioners, and many were extremely scandalised. One of them, in particular, always absented himself from mass, when it fell to the priest's turn to celebrate it. Now it happened on a festival day, during the time of mass, that as this person was walking alone through a meadow, a sudden thirst came upon him; insomuch, that he was persuaded, unless present relief could be obtained, he should die. In this extremity, continuing his walk, he discovered a rivulet of the purest water, of which he copiously drank. But the more he drank, the more violent became his thirst. Surprised at so unusual an occurrence, he said to himself, "I will find out the source of this rivulet, and there satisfy my thirst." As he proceeded, an old man of majestic appearance met him, and said, "My friend, where are you going?" The other answered, "I am oppressed by an excessive drought, surpassing even belief. I discovered a little stream of water, and drank of it plentifully; but the more I drank, the more I thirsted. So I am endeavouring to find its source, that I may drink there, and,

if it be possible, deliver myself from the torment." The old man pointed with his finger. "There," said he, "is the spring-head of the rivulet. But, tell me, mine honest friend, why are you not at Church, and with other good Christians, hearing Mass?" The man answered, "Truly, Master, our priest leads such an execrable life, that I think it utterly impossible he should celebrate it, so as to please God." To which the old man returned, "Suppose what you say is true. Observe this fountain, from which so much excellent water issues, and from which you have lately drunk." He looked in the direction pointed out, and beheld a putrid dog with its mouth wide open, and its teeth black and decayed, through which the whole fountain gushed in a surprising manner. The man regarded the stream with great terror and confusion of mind, ardently desirous of quenching his thirst, but apprehensive of poison from the fetid and loathsome carcase, with which, to all appearance, the water was imbued. "Be not afraid," said the old man, observing his repugnance; "thou hast already drank of

the rivulet; drink again, it will not harm thee." Encouraged by these assurances, and impelled by the intensity of his thirst, he partook of it once more, and instantly recovered from the drought. "Oh! master," cried he, "never man drank of such delicious water." The old man answered, "See now; as this water, gushing through the mouth of a putrid dog, is neither polluted, nor loses aught of its natural taste or colour, so is the celebration of mass by a worthless minister. And therefore, though the vices of such men may displease and disgust, yet should you not forsake the duties of which they are the appointed organ." Saying these words, the old man disappeared; and what the other had seen he communicated to his neighbours, and ever after punctually attended mass. He brought this unstable and transitory life to a good end; and passed from that which is corruptible to inherit incorruption. Which may our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of Mary, grant to all. (8)

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the Emperor is God, in whose kingdom, that is, in the world, there is an evil priest; namely, every perverse Christian. For as the priest provides for the spiritual welfare of his parishioners, so the Christian is required to watch over and preserve the spiritual gifts communicated in baptism. The bad priest, through the influence of a bad example, causes many to separate from the community; and therefore, St. Gregory well says, that "as often as he does an ill action, he loses a soul." In like manner, the bad Christian occasions the condemnation of multitudes by the attraction of wicked examples and enticing words. If any of you, to whom I now speak, have been so deluded, act like the parishioner in our story. Walk across the meadows, that is, through the world, until you find one whom your soul esteems and loves—to wit, that old man, who is Christ, revealed by actions of benevolence and mercy. But, in the first place, drink of the rivulet although it should not immediately extinguish your

thirst. That rivulet, is baptism, which alone is able to quench the drought occasioned by original sin. Yet should the evil nature of that origin prevail, and you fall again into error, then seek out the fountain, and there drink. For that fountain is our Lord Jesus Christ, as he witnesses of himself. "I am a fountain of living water, springing up into eternal life." *John* iv. The streams or veins of that fountain are the words of Scripture, which too frequently issue from the mouth of a putrid dog; that is, of an evil preacher. If it should be asked, why the spring of pure water is made to flow through the rank jaws of a dog, rather than through those of any other animal, it is answered, that Scripture more usually compares it with a priest, than with any thing else; and as in a dog there are four excellent qualities, described in the following couplet.

> "In cane bis bina sunt; et lingua medicina,
> "Naris odoratus, amor integer, atque latratus."

[In a dog there are four things · a medicinal tongue; (9) a distinguishing nose; an unshaken faith, and unremitting watchfulness.]

So priests, who would be useful in their station, ought diligently to cultivate these four properties. *First*, that their tongue possess the power of a physician in healing the sick in heart, and probing the wounds of sin; being careful, at the same time, that too rough a treatment does not exacerbate rather than cure: for it is the nature of dogs to *lick* the body's wounds. *Secondly*, as a dog, by keenness of scent distinguishes a fox from a hare, so a priest, by the quickness of his perception in auricular disclosures, should discover what portion of them appertains to the cunning of the fox—that is, to heretical and sophistical perverseness; what to internal struggles and timorous apprehensions, arising from the detestation of evil or hopelessness of pardon; and what to the unbroken ferocity of the wolf or lion, originating in a haughty contempt of consequences; with other gradations of a like character. *Thirdly*, as the dog is of all animals the most faithful, and ready in defence of his master or his family, so priests also, should shew themselves staunch advocates for the Catholic faith; and zealous

for the everlasting salvation, not of their parishioners alone, but of every denomination of true Christians, according to the words of our Lord, *John* x. " A good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep." Also, *John* i. " Christ laid down his life for us." And we, in humble imitation of our divine Master, ought to lay down our lives for our brethren. *Fourthly,* as a dog by barking betrays the approach of thieves, and permits not the property of his master to be invaded—so, the faithful priest is the watch-dog of the great King: one, who by diligence in his calling, prevents the machinations of the devil from taking effect; from drawing the soul out of that high treasury composed of the precious blood of Christ; and where alone the amazing price of our redemption is eternally reposited.

TALE XIII.

OF INORDINATE LOVE.

A CERTAIN Emperor was strongly attached to a beautiful wife. In the first year of their marriage, she was delivered of a son, upon whom she doated with extravagant fondness. When the child had completed its third year, the king died; for whose death great lamentation was made through the whole kingdom. The queen bewailed him bitterly; and after his remains were deposited in the royal sepulchre, took up her residence in another part of the country, accompanied by her son. This child became the object of an affection so violent, that no consideration could induce her to leave him; and they invariably occupied the same bed, even till

the boy had attained his eighteenth year. Now when the devil perceived the irregular attachment of the mother, and the filial return exhibited by the son, he insinuated black and unnatural thoughts into their minds; and from time to time repeating his detestable solicitations, finally overthrew them. The queen became pregnant; and the unhappy son, filled with the deepest horror, and writhing beneath the most intolerable agony, quitted the kingdom, and never was heard of again. In due time, the queen was delivered of a lovely female, whom her eyes no sooner beheld, than—(mark, ye who dream that one dereliction from virtue, may be tried with impunity—mark!) desperate at the remembrance of her fearful crime, and apprehensive of detection, she snatched up a knife that lay beside her, and plunged it into the infant's breast. Not content with this exhibition of maternal inhumanity, she cut it directly across the throat, from whence the blood rapidly gushed forth, and falling upon the palm of her left hand, distinctly impressed four circular lines, which no human power

could erase. Terrified, not less at the singular consequence of her guilt, than at the guilt itself, she carefully concealed this awful and mysterious evidence, and dedicated herself for life to the service of the blessed Virgin. Yet though penitent for what she had done, and regularly every fifteenth morning duly confessed, she scrupulously avoided any disclosure relating to that horrid transaction. She distributed alms with the most unbounded liberality; and the people experiencing her kindness and benevolence, evinced towards her the greatest respect and love.

It happened on a certain night as her confessor knelt at his devotions, repeating five times aloud the "Ave Maria," that the blessed Virgin herself appeared to him, and said, "I am the Virgin Mary, and have an important communication to make to thee." The confessor, full of joy, answered, "Oh! dear Lady, wherein can thy servant please thee?" She replied, "The queen of this kingdom will confess herself to you; but there is one sin she has committed, which shame and horror will not permit her to disclose. On the

morrow she will come to you; tell her from me, that her alms and her prayers have been accepted by Him who delights in the pure oblation of a contrite heart; I command her therefore, to confess that crime which she secretly committed in her chamber—for alas! she slew her daughter. I have entreated for her, and her sin is forgiven, if she will confess it. But if she yield no attention to your words, bid her lay aside the cover upon her left hand; and on her palm, you will read the crime which she refuses to acknowledge. If she deny this also, take it off by force." When she had thus spoken, the blessed Virgin disappeared. In the morning, the queen with great humility was shrieved of all her sins—that one excepted. After she had uttered as much as she chose, the confessor said, "Madam, and dear daughter, people are very inquisitive to know for what strange reason you constantly wear that cover upon your left hand. Let me see it, I beseech you, that I may ascertain why it is concealed, and whether the concealment be pleasing to God." The queen answered, "Sir, my hand

is diseased, and therefore, I cannot show it." Hearing this, the confessor caught hold of her arm, and notwithstanding her resistance, drew off the cover. "Lady," said he, "fear not; the blessed Virgin Mary loves you; and it is she who hath commanded me to do this." When the hand was uncovered, there appeared four circles of blood. In the first circle there were four letters in the form of a C; in the second, four D's; in the third, four M's; and in the fourth, four R's. Upon the outward edge of the circles, in the manner of a seal, a blood-coloured writing was distinguishable, containing the legend beneath. First, of the letter C,—which was interpreted, "*Casu cecidisti carne cæcata,*" [Blinded by the flesh thou hast fallen.] The letter D, "*Dæmoni dedisti dona donata,*" [Thou hast given thyself for certain gifts to the devil.] The letter M, "*Monstrat manifestè manus maculata,*" [The stain upon thy hand discovers thee.] The letter R, "*Recedet rubigo, regina rogatà,*" [When the queen is interrogated her dishonour ceases.] The lady beholding this, fell at the confessor's feet, and with many tears

meekly related her dreadful offences. Then being entirely and truly penitent, she was absolved; and a very few days afterwards, slept in the Lord. Her death was long lamented by the whole state. (10)

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the emperor, is Jesus Christ, who married a beautiful girl, that is, our human nature, when he became incarnate. But first he was betrothed to her, when the Father, speaking to the Son and Holy Ghost, said—" Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Our Lord had a fair child, that is to say, the *soul* made free from all spot by his Passion, and by virtue of baptism. That soul is slain in us by sin. Do you ask how? I will tell you. By giving ourselves up to carnal delights, whose fruit is death. The blood on the hand is sin, which tenaciously cleaves to us; as it is said, " My soul is ever in my own hands"—that is, whether it does well or ill, is as openly apparent, as if it were placed in the hands for the inspection and sentence of the Supreme Judge.

[I have omitted the greater part of this *moralization* as somewhat too delicate in its nature, and too complex in its construction. A second follows upon the same subject, which I have also omitted, and for the same reason.]

TALE XIV.

OF HONOURING PARENTS.

In the reign of the Emperor Dorotheus a decree was passed, that children should support their parents. There was, at that time, in the kingdom, a certain soldier, who had espoused a very fair and virtuous woman, by whom he had a son. It happened that the soldier went upon a journey, was made prisoner, and very rigidly confined. Immediately he wrote to his wife and son for ransom. The intelligence communicated great uneasiness to the former,

who wept so bitterly that she became blind. Whereupon the son said to his mother, "I will hasten to my father, and release him from prison." The mother answered, "Thou shalt not go; for thou art my only son—even the half of my soul *, and it may happen to thee as it has done to him. Hadst thou rather ransom thy absent parent than protect her who is with thee, and presses thee to her affectionate arms? Is not the possession of one thing better than the expectation of two? (11) Thou art my son as well as thy father's; and I am present, while he is absent. I conclude, therefore, that you ought by no means to forsake me though to redeem your father." The son very properly answered, "Although I am thy son yet he is my father. He is abroad and surrounded by the merciless; but thou art at home, protected and cherished by loving friends. He is a captive, but thou art free—blind, indeed, but he perhaps sees not the light of heaven, and pours forth unheeded groans in the gloom of a loathsome dungeon

* "Animæ dimidium meæ." This phrase is met with frequently in these volumes, and would almost lead one to suspect that the Author was acquainted with Horace, where the line occurs. See his third Ode.

oppressed with chains, with wounds, and misery. Therefore, it is my determination to go to him and redeem him." The son did so; and every one applauded and honoured him for the indefatigable industry with which he achieved his father's liberation.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the Emperor is our heavenly Father, who imposes upon sons the duty of maintaining and obeying their parents. But who is our father and mother? Christ is our father, as we read in *Deut*. 32. His affection for us partakes more of this, than of the maternal character. You know that when the son transgresses, the father corrects him somewhat harshly, even with stripes and blows; while the doating mother soothes and coaxes her favourite into humour. Christ permits us to be scourged, because of our many failings; on the contrary, our mother, the world, promises us infinite pleasures and lascivious enjoyments. Christ forsakes us, and goes into a far country, as it is written in the Psalms, "I am made a stranger by my brethren." Christ is still bound and in pri-

son; not indeed by himself, but by those who are the members of his Church; for so says the Apostle to the Hebrews. "Whosoever lives in any mortal sin is cast into the prison of the devil;" but our Father wills that we labour for his redemption.—*Luke* 12. "Let the dead bury their dead," said our blessed Lord; "but go thou, and declare the kingdom of God,"—and this is to redeem Christ. For whosoever powerfully preaches the word of God, advantages his brother, and in him redeems Christ.—*Matt.* 20. "That which you have done to the least of these my followers, ye have also done unto me." But the mother, that is, the world, will not permit a man to follow Christ into exile and poverty, but detains him with diverse arguments. "I cannot," she says, "endure a life of abstinence and privation which I must necessarily submit to, if you repent and turn after Christ." Thus it is with whatsoever she proposes to man's acceptance: but do not comply with her wishes. She is blind indeed, for she exclaims, "Let us enjoy the good things of life, and speedily use the creature like as in youth;" but, my beloved, if you

are good and grateful sons, thus answer your worldly minded mother. "My father is the source of my being—that is, of my soul; and all things which I possess, are his free gift." Therefore, I advise you not to desire length of years, which may approach in suffering, poverty, and blindness; for then the world will flee you, how much soever you cling to it. No longer than you can be serviceable will you be valued *. Remember this, and study to amend your lives with all diligence; that so you may come eventually to everlasting life, To which may God lead us, who lives, &c.

* The sentiment here expressed, implies a greater knowledge of the world than we should have looked for in an ascetic; but we frequently meet with a shrewd reflection, when least prepared for it—as the forest-ranger finds the "cowslip, violet, and the primrose pale," ornamenting the wildest and most sequestered nooks. Old Burton has a passage so similar, both in thought and expression, that I cannot forbear affixing it at foot. "Our estate and *bene esse* ebbs and flows with our commodity; and as we are endowed or enriched, so we are beloved or esteemed: it lasts no longer than our wealth; when that is gone, and the object removed, farewell friendship: as long as bounty, good cheer, and rewards were to be hoped, friends enough; they were tied to thee by the teeth, and would follow thee as crows do a carcase: but when thy goods are gone and spent, the lamp of their love is out; and thou shalt be contemned, scorned, hated, injured."—*Anatomy of Melancholy*. Vol. II. p. 169.

TALE XV.

OF THE LIFE OF ALEXIUS, SON OF THE SENATOR EUFEMIAN *.

In the reign of one of the Roman Emperors †, lived a youth, named Alexius, the son of Eufemian, a noble Roman, at that time the chief ornament of the emperor's court. He was attended by a band of three thousand youths, girded with golden zones, and habited in silken vestures. His expenditure was princely. He daily maintained three tables, to which the widow and the orphan were ever welcome. Their necessities were often supplied by his own person; and at the ninth hour, in com-

* It is proper to warn the reader, that this tale is somewhat periphrastically translated.

† Before the close of the Tale we find it was in the reign of *two*.

pany with other devout men, he sat down to dinner. His wife, whose name was Abael, was as religious and charitable as himself. But there is ever some bitterness mixed up with the draught of human joy; and in the midst of so much splendour, the want of a successor was long a source of unavailing affliction. At length their prayers were heard; Heaven, in its benevolence, blessed them with a son, who was carefully instructed in all the polite learning of the period. Arriving at the age of manhood, he proved himself an acute and solid reasoner. But reason is no barrier against love; he became attached to a lady of the blood-royal, and with the consent of their friends was united to her. On the very evening of their nuptials, when the clamour of the feast had subsided, the pious youth commenced a theological disquisition, and strove with much force and earnestness to impress his bride with the fear and love of God. When he had concluded, recommending her to preserve the same modesty of demeanour for which she had always been distinguished, he consigned to the care of a servant his gold

ring, and the clasp * of the sword-belt which usually begirt him, "Take charge of these vanities," said he, "for I abjure them; and as long as it shall please God, keep them in remembrance of me: may the Almighty guide us." He then provided a sum of money, and the same night embarked in a ship bound for Laodicea. From thence he proceeded to Edessa †, a city of Syria. It was here that the image of our Lord Jesus Christ, wrought upon linen by supernatural hands, was preserved. On reaching this place he distributed whatever he had brought with him to the poor; and putting on a worn and tattered garment, joined himself to a number of mendicants who sat in the porch of the temple dedicated to the Virgin Mary. He now constantly solicited alms; but of all that he received, only the smallest portion was retained,—an unbounded charity leading him to bestow the residue upon his more needy, or more covetous brethren.

The father of Alexius, however, was over-

* The Latin is *caput*; if it mean not this, I know not what it means.

† It has also borne the names of Antiochia, Callirrhoë Justinopolis—and *Rhoas*, said to have been built by Nimrod.

whelmed with sorrow at the inexplicable departure of his son; and despatched his servants in pursuit of him to various parts of the world. These servants were very diligent in their inquiries; and it chanced that certain of them came to the city of Edessa, and were recognized by Alexius; but, pertinaciously concealing himself under the garb of want and misery, he passed unknown and unsuspected. The men, little aware who was experiencing their bounty, conferred large alms upon the paupers amongst whom he sojourned; and his heart silently but gratefully acknowledged the benefaction. "I thank thee, O my God, that thou hast thought good to dispense thine alms by the hands of my own servants."

On this unsuccessful issue of their search, the messengers returned; and when the intelligence of their failure reached his mother, she shut herself up in a remote chamber, and there gave utterance to her griefs. She slept upon the ground, with sack-cloth only for a covering; and solemnly vowed never to change her way of life until she recovered her lost son.

The husband, thus left alone, quitted his own residence and abode with his father-in-law. In the mean time, Alexius remained a beggar in the porch of St. Mary's church for the space of seventeen years; until at length the image of the Virgin, which stood within the sacred edifice said to the warden, "Cause that Man of God to enter the sanctuary: for he is worthy of the kingdom of Heaven, upon whom the spirit of God rests. His prayer ascends like incense to the throne of Grace." But the warden knew not of whom she spake, and said, "Is that the man, who sits at the entrance of the porch?" The Virgin answering in the affirmitive, he was immediately brought in. Now a circumstance of this extraordinary nature soon attracted remark; and the veneration with which they began to consider Alexius, approached almost to adoration. But he despised human glory, and entering a ship, set sail for Tarsus*, in Cilicia; but, the providence of God so ordered, that a violent tempest carried them into a Roman

* Tarsus is the capital of Cilicia, called by the Turks *Tersis*.

port. Alexius, informed of this circumstance, said within himself, "I will hasten to my father's house; no one will know me, and it is better that I prove burthensome to him, than to another." As he proceeded, he met his father coming from the palace, surrounded by a large concourse of dependents, and immediately he shouted after him—"Servant of God, command a poor and desolate stranger to be conveyed into your house, and fed with the crumbs which fall from the table: so shall the Lord of the wanderer, recompense thee an hundred-fold." The father, out of love to him whom he knew not, gave him into the charge of his followers, and appropriated to him a room in his house. He supplied him with meat from his own table, and appointed one who was accustomed to attend upon himself, to serve him. But Alexius discontinued not the fervency of his devotion, and macerated his body, with fasts and other austerities. And though the pampered servants derided him; and frequently emptied their household utensils on his head, his patience was always invincible. In this

manner, for seventeen years under his own father's roof, his life was spent; but at last, perceiving by the spirit, that his end approached, he procured ink and paper, and recorded the narrative of his life. Now on the succeeding Sunday, after the solemnization of mass, a voice echoing like thunder among the mountains, was heard through the city. It said, "Come unto me all ye that labour, and I will give you rest." The people, terrified and awe-struck, fell upon their faces; when a second time the voice exclaimed, "Seek out a man of God to offer a prayer for the iniquity of Rome." Search was accordingly made, but no such man could be found; and the same voice waxing louder, and breathing as it were with the mingled blast of ten thousand thousand trumpets, again spoke, "Search in the house of Eufemian." Then the Emperors Arcadius and Honorius *, in conjunction with the Pontiff Innocent, proceeded towards the house to which the words of the Invisible

* Are we to suppose that the *one* emperor had been succeeded by the *two*, since the commencement of the Tale? The *Pontiff* Innocent, seems *supererogatory*.

directed them, and as they approached, the servant who attended upon Alexius came running to his master, and cried, "What think you, my lord? Is not the mendicant stranger a man of exemplary life?" Eufemian, following up the suggestion, hastened to his chamber and found him extended upon the bed. Life had already passed, but his countenance retained a dazzling emanation of glory, like the countenance of a cherub in its own pure and beatified element. A paper occupied the right hand, which Eufemian would have borne away, but he was unable to extricate it from the grasp of the dead man. Leaving him, therefore, he returned to the Emperors and the Pontiff, and related what he had seen. They were astonished, and entering the apartment, exclaimed, "Sinners though we are, we direct the helm of State, and provide for the well-being of the pastoral government. Give us, then, the paper, that we may know what it contains." Immediately the Pontiff drew near, and put his hand upon the scroll which the deceased yet firmly grasped,—and he instantly relaxed his hold.

It was read to the people ; and when the father, Eufemian, heard its contents, he was paralyzed with grief. His strength deserted him, and he staggered and fell. Returning to himself a little, he rent his garment, plucked off the silver hairs of his head, and tore the venerable beard that swept his unhappy bosom. He even inflicted severe wounds upon himself, and falling upon the dead body, cried, "Alas! my son—my son! why hast thou laid up for me such deadly anguish? Why, for so many years, hast thou endured a bitterness which death itself cannot exceed? Wretched man that I am, he who should have been the guardian of my increasing infirmities, and the hope and the honour of my age lies upon this miserable pallet, and speaks not. Oh! where is consolation to be found?"—At this instant, like an enraged and wounded lioness breaking through the toils with which the hunters had encompassed her, the poor broken-hearted Abael, who had followed in the press, rushed desperately forward. Her garments were torn, and hanging about her in shreds; her hair

dishevelled and flying; her eyes, wild and sparkling with the violence of emotion, were raised piteously to heaven. With that strength which frenzy sometimes supplies, she burst through the multitude who struggled to detain her; and approaching the body of her deceased child, said, or rather shrieked, in a heart-piercing accent, " I will pass; I will look upon my soul's only comfort. Did not this dried fountain suckle him? Have not these withered arms supported him? Hath he not slept—ah! not such sleep as this!—while I have watched him? Oh my child?" Saying this, she threw her emaciated form upon the unconscious object of her solicitude; and again giving vent to her sorrows, exclaimed, " My own dear boy! light of the dimmed eyes that will soon close upon all, since thou art gone—why hast thou wrought this? why wast thou so inhuman? Thou didst see our tears—thou didst hearken to our groans—yet camest not forward to abate them! The slaves scoffed at and injured thee, but thou wert patient—too, too patient." Again, and again, the unfortunate mother prostrated her-

self upon the body; one while clasping him in her arms, at another, passing her hand reverently over his seraphic features. Now, she impressed a kiss upon the cold cheek and eye-lids which her tears had moistened—and now bending over him, muttered something in a low and inaudible voice. Suddenly turning to the spectators, she said, "Weep, I pray ye, weep: ye who are regarding the agonies of a bereaved parent—have ye no tear to spare her? Abiding together for seventeen years, I knew him not!—not him, my beloved and beautiful! They taunted him, and showered their unmanly blows upon his enduring head. Oh! who will again bring tears to my burning eyelids? Who—who, will bear a part in my misery?"

The wife, whom Alexius had married and quitted on the evening of their nuptials, had been borne along by the congregating populace; but distress, until now, had held her silent *. As Abael ceased, she sprung for-

* The reader will not perhaps comprehend much ocoasion for the lady's sorrow.

ward and cried, " *Thou*, miserable! what then am I? Woe is me! to-day I am desolate; to-day I am all a widow! Now, there is none for whom I may look—none, whom I may yet expect, although he come not. Where shall mine eye see gladness? The glass of my joy is broken *—shivered—shivered: my hope is extinct; and grief is all the portion of my widowhood." The multitude, penetrated by the various calamities of which they were witnesses, sympathized with the sufferers, and wept aloud.

By command of the pontiff and the two emperors, the body was deposited on a sumptuous bier, and brought into the middle of the city. Proclamation was made, that the man of God was discovered, whom they had before sought in vain: and every one crowded to the bier. Now, if any infirm person touched the hallowed corpse, instantly he was strengthened. The blind received their sight; those who were possessed of devils were set free, and all the sick, be the disorder what it might,

* The monk is not often so poetical.

when they had once come in contact with the body, were made whole. These miraculous effects, attracted the attention of the emperors and the pontiff. They determined to support the bier; and when they had done so, they were sanctified by the holiness which proceeded from the corse. They then scattered great abundance of gold and silver about the streets, that the people's natural cupidity might draw them aside, and the bier be carried forward to the church; but, strange to say, careless of all else, they pressed yet the more vehemently to touch it. At length, after great exertions, he was brought to the church of St. Boniface, the Martyr; and there, for the space of seven days, they tarried, praising God. They constructed a monument, glittering with gold and precious stones, and here, with the greatest reverence, placed the body of their Saint. Even from the very monument, so sweet an odour of sanctity broke forth, that it seemed to be entirely filled with the most fragrant aroma. He died about the year of our Lord CCCXXVIII. (12)

APPLICATION.

My beloved, Eufemian is any man of this world who hath a darling son, for whose advantage he labours day and night. He obtains a wife for him, that is, the vanity of the world, which he delights in as in a bride; nay, the world's vanities are often more to a man than the most virtuous wife—for life is sacrificed to the one, but, alas! how seldom to the other! The mother, is the world itself, which greatly values her worldly-minded children. But the good son, like the blessed Alexius, is more studious to please God than his parents, remembering that it is said,—"He who forsakes land or houses, or father, or mother, or wife, for my sake, shall receive an hundred fold, and possess eternal life." Alexius enters a ship, &c. The ship is our holy Church, by which we ought to enter, if we would obtain everlasting happiness. We must likewise lay aside gorgeous raiment—that is, the pomps of the world; and associate with the poor—that is, the poor in spirit.

The warden, who conducted him into the Church, is a prudent confessor, whose duty it is, to instruct the sinner, and lead him to a knowledge of the sacred Scriptures, by which the soul may pass unharmed to immortality. But sometimes tempests arise, and hurry a man to his own country, as it happened to Alexius. The temptations of the Evil One, are symbolized by these tempests, which turn the voyager from his settled course, and prevent a life of goodness. If, therefore, you feel that you are subject to certain temptations, follow the example of the holy Alexius. Assume the dress of a pilgrim—that is, take the qualities necessary for the pilgrimage of this life, and disguise yourself from your carnal and worldly father, and become a man of God. But if it fall out, that when such a one aspires to a life of penitence, his parents lament, and decry their child's contempt of the world, and his voluntary choice of poverty for the love of God—still, it is safer to displease them, than Heaven. Obtain, therefore, a fair piece of paper, which is a good conscience, on which inscribe your life; and

then, the High Priest with the emperors will draw near—that is, Christ with a multitude of angels—and convey your soul to the church of St. Boniface—that is, to eternal life, where all sanctity (or joy) abounds.

TALE XVI.

OF AN EXEMPLARY LIFE.

We read of a certain Roman Emperor, who built a magnificent palace. In digging the foundation, the workmen discovered a golden sarcophagus, ornamented with three circlets on which were inscribed, " I have expended —I have given—I have kept—I have possessed—I do possess—I have lost—I am punished." In the front also, was written, " What I expended, I have; what I gave away, I have."(13) The Emperor, on seeing this, called to him the nobles of his empire, and

said, " Go, and consider amongst ye, what this superscription signifies." The noblemen replied, " Sire, the meaning is, that an Emperor, who reigned before your Majesty, wished to leave an example for the imitation of his successors. He therefore wrote, ' I have expended'—that is, my life; judging some, admonishing others, and governing to the best of my ability. ' I have given,'—that is, military equipments, and supplies to the needy; to every one according to his desert. ' I have kept,'—that is, exact justice; shewing mercy to the indigent, and yielding to the labourer his hire. ' I have possessed,'—that is, a generous and true heart; recompensing faithfully those who have done me service, and exhibiting at all times a kind and affable exterior. ' I do possess,'—that is, a hand to bestow, to protect, and to punish. ' I have lost,'—that is, my folly; I have lost the friendship of my foes, and the lascivious indulgences of the flesh. ' I am punished,'—that is, in hell; because I believed not in one eternal God, and put no faith in the redemption." * * * * * * (14)

The Emperor hearing this, ever after regulated himself and his subjects with greater wisdom, and finished his life in peace.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the Emperor is any Christian, whose duty it is to raise a fair structure,—that is, a heart prepared for the reception of God. If he dig deep, led onward by sincere contrition for past offences, he will find a golden sarcophagus,—that is, a mind gilded with virtue and full of the divine grace. Three golden circlets will ornament it, and these are faith, hope, and charity. But what is written there? In the first place, "I have expended." Tell me, my beloved, what have you expended? The good Christian may reply, "Body and soul in the service of God." Whosoever of you, thus expends his life, will secure the rewards of eternity. The second legend saith, "I have kept." Tell me, my beloved, what have you kept? The good Christian may answer, "A broken and contrite spirit." The

third inscription says, "I have given." Tell me, my beloved, what have you given? The good Christian may reply, "My whole heart to God." *Et sic de cæteris.*

[From hence, the morals have been abridged, and merely the chief heads of them given.]

TALE XVII.

OF A PERFECT LIFE.

An Emperor decreed, that whoever wished to serve him, should obtain his wish, conditionally, that he struck three times upon the palace-gate, by which those within might understand what he wanted. Now, there was a certain poor man in the Roman empire, called Guido; who, on hearing the mode by which admission to the Emperor's service was to be

attained, thus thought—" I am a poor fellow, of low descent; it is better for me to serve and acquire wealth, than to live in independence and starve." So he proceeded to the palace, and according to the edict, gave three blows upon the gate. The porter immediately opened it, and brought him in. He was introduced to the Emperor's presence, who said, " What seek you, my friend?" Guido replied, " I wish to serve your Majesty."—" And for what office may you be fit?" returned the Emperor. " I can serve, with tolerable expertness in six capacities;" said Guido, " First, I can act as body-guard to the prince; I can make his bed, dress his food, and wash his feet. Secondly, I can watch when others sleep, and sleep when others watch. Thirdly, I can drink good drink, and tell whether it be good or not. Fourthly, I can invite company to a festival for my master's honor. Fifthly, I can make a fire without the least smoke, which will warm all that approach it. Sixthly, I can teach people the way to the holy land, from whence they will return in excellent health."—" By my faith," said the Emperor,

"these are fine matters, and will be useful to a good many: thou shalt stay with me, and serve me first as body-guard. In each department thou shalt remain a full year." Guido expressed himself content; and every night made ready the Emperor's bed, washed the linen, and occasionally changed it. Then he lay down at the entrance of the chamber, armed at all points. He likewise provided a dog, whose barking might warn him of any danger. Every night, he washed the King's feet, and in all respects ministered so faithfully and manfully, that not the least fault was found in him. The Emperor, therefore, was well pleased; and at the expiration of the year, made him his seneschal, preparatory to the fulfilment of the second office, which was, to provide every thing requisite. Then Guido commenced his operations; and during the whole summer collected a variety of stores, and watched with great assiduity the fittest opportunities. So that on the approach of winter, when others, who had wasted the proper season, began to labor and lay up, he took his ease, and thus completed the service

of the second year. When the Emperor perceived his diligence and sagacity, he called to him his chief butler, and said, " Friend, put into my cup some of the best wine, mingled with must and vinegar, (15) and give it to Guido to taste: for that is his third ministry, namely, to taste good drink, and pronounce upon its qualities." The butler did as he was commanded. When Guido had tasted, he said, " It was good; it is good, it will be good. That is, the must which is new, will be good when it is older; the old wine is good, at present; and the vinegar was good formerly." The Emperor saw that he had answered discreetly and accurately; and this without previously knowing the component parts of the beverage. He therefore said, " Go now through town and country and invite all my friends to a festival; for Christmas is at hand: herein shall consist your fourth ministry." Guido instantly set out; but instead of executing the orders he had received, he invited none but the Emperor's enemies: thus, on Christmas eve, his court was filled with them. When he ob-

served this, he was exceedingly perturbed, and calling Guido to him, said, " How is this? did you not say that you knew what men to ask to my table?" He answered, " Surely, my Lord."—" And said I not," returned the Emperor, very much provoked, " said I not, that thou wert to invite my *friends?* How comes it that thou hast assembled only my enemies?"—" My Lord,' replied Guido, " suffer me to speak. At all seasons, and at all hours, your friends may visit you, and they are received with pleasure; but it is not so with your enemies. From which reflection, I persuaded myself that a conciliating behaviour, and a good dinner would convert your inveterate enemies into warm friends." This was really the case; before the feast concluded, they all became cordial partisans, and as long as they lived remained faithful to their sovereign. The Emperor, therefore, was much delighted, and cried, " Blessed be God, my enemies, are now my friends! Execute thy fifth ministry, and make both for them and me, a fire that shall burn without smoke." Guido replied,

" It shall be done immediately," and he thus performed his promise. In the heat of summer, he dried a quantity of green wood in the sun: having done this, he made a fire with it, that blazed and sparkled, but threw out no smoke: so that the Emperor and his friends warmed themselves without inconvenience. He was now directed to perform his last service, and promised great honors and wealth on completing it also, equally to the satisfaction of his master. " My Lord," said Guido, " whoever would travel to the Holy Land, must follow me to the sea-side." Accordingly, proclamation being made, men, women, and children, in immense crowds, hastened after him. When they arrived at the appointed place, Guido said, " My friends, do you observe in the sea the same things which I do?" They answered, " We know not that."—" Then," continued he, " do you perceive in the midst of the waves an immense rock? Lift up your eyes and look." They replied, " Master, we see it well enough, but do not understand why you ask us."—" Know, said he, " that in this rock there is a sort of

bird, continually sitting on her nest, in which are seven eggs. While she is thus employed, the sea is tranquil; but if she happen to quit her nest, storm and tempest immediately succeed; insomuch, that they who would venture upon the ocean, are certain to be cast away. On the other hand, as long as she sits upon the eggs, whoever goes to sea, will go and return in safety."—" But," said they, " how shall we ascertain when the bird is on her nest, and when she is not?" He replied, " She never quits her nest, except on some particular emergency. For there is another bird, exceedingly hostile to her, and laboring day and night to defile her nest, and break the eggs. Now, the bird of the nest, when she sees her eggs broken, and her nest fouled, instantly flies away possessed with the greatest grief; then, the sea rages and the winds become very boisterous. At that time, you ought especially to avoid putting out of port." The people made answer, " But, master, what remedy is there for this? How shall we prevent the unfriendly bird from approaching the other's nest, and so pass safely over the wa-

ters?"—"There is nothing," returned Guido, "which this unfriendly bird so much abhors as the blood of a lamb. Sprinkle, therefore, with this blood, the inside and the outside of the nest, and as long as one single drop remains, it will never approach it: the bird of the nest will sit: the sea will continue calm, and you will pass and repass with perfect safety." When they had heard this, they took the blood of the lamb, and sprinkled it, as he had said. They then passed securely to the Holy Land; and the Emperor, seeing that Guido had fulfilled every ministry with wisdom, promoted him to a great military command, and bestowed on him immense riches. (16)

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the Emperor is our heavenly Father, who decreed, that whosoever struck thrice upon the gate,—that is, who prayed, fasted, and gave alms, should become a soldier of the church militant, and finally attain

everlasting life. Guido is any poor man, who in baptism begins his ministry. The first office, is to serve Christ, and prepare the heart for virtue. The second, is to watch: "For ye know not at what hour the Son of Man cometh." The third, to taste of penitence; which *was* good to the saints who live eternally in heaven; and it *is* good, because it brings us to that blessed situation. Lastly, it *will* be good, when the resurrection is come, and we are summoned to receive a crown of glory. The fourth ministry, is to invite Christ's enemies to become his friends, and inherit eternal life: for he "came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." The fifth, is to light the fire of charity which shall burn free from all impure and improper feelings. The sixth, to teach the way to the Holy Land,—that is, to heaven. The sea, over which men must be conveyed, is the world. The rock, in the midst of it, is the human form, or rather the heart, on which a bird cowers, that is, the Holy Spirit. The seven eggs, are seven gifts of the Spirit. If

the Spirit leave us, the devil defiles the nest, and destroys those good gifts. The blood of the lamb is Christ's blood, shed for our salvation, with which we ought ever to be sprinkled; that is, ever to retain it in memory. (17)

TALE XVIII.

OF VENIAL SIN.

A CERTAIN soldier, called Julian, unwittingly killed his parents. For being of noble birth, and addicted, as youth frequently is, to the sports of the field, a stag which he hotly pursued, suddenly turned round, and addressed him; "Thou who pursuest me so fiercely, shalt be the destruction of thy parents." These words greatly alarmed Julian, who feared their accomplishment even while

he disavowed the possibility. Leaving, therefore, his amusement, he went privately into a distant country, and enrolled himself in the bands of a certain chieftain. His conduct, as well in war as in peace, merited so highly from the prince he served, that he created him a knight, and gave him the widow of a castellan (17) in marriage, with her castle as a dowry.

All this while, the parents of Julian bewailed the departure of their son, and diligently sought for him in all places. At length they arrived at the castle, and in Julian's absence were introduced to his wife, who asked them what they were. They communicated without reserve, the occasion of their search, and their sorrow for an only child. Convinced by this explanation that they were her husband's parents, (for he had often conversed with her about them, and detailed the strange occurrence which induced him to flee his country) she received them very kindly; and in consideration of the love she bore her husband, put them into her own bed, and commanded another to be prepared elsewhere

for herself. Now early in the morning, the lady castellan went to her devotions. In the mean time Julian returning home, hastened, according to custom, to the chamber of his wife, imagining that she had not yet risen. Fearful of awaking her, he softly entered the apartment, and perceiving two persons in bed, instantly concluded that his wife was disloyal. Without a moment's pause, he unsheathed his sabre, and slew both. Then in the greatest agitation and bitterness of heart, he hurried from the chamber, and accidentally took the direction in which the church lay, and by which his wife had proceeded not long before. On the threshold of the sacred building he distinguished her, and struck with the utmost amazement, enquired whom they were that had taken possession of his bed. She replied, that they were his parents; who after long and wearisome search in pursuit of him, arrived at his castle the last evening. The intelligence was as a thunderbolt to Julian; and unable to contain himself he burst into an agony of tears. "Oh!" he exclaimed, "lives there in the world so forlorn a wretch

as I am? This accursed hand has murdered my parents, and fulfilled the horrible prediction, which I have struggled to avoid. Dearest wife, pardon my fatal suspicions, and receive my last farewell; for never will I know rest, until I am satisfied that God has forgiven me." His wife answered, "Wilt thou abandon me then, my beloved, and leave me alone and widowed? No—I have been the participator of thy happiness, and now will participate thy grief." Julian opposed not, and they departed together towards a large river, that flowed at no great distance; and where, from the rapidity and depth of the waters, many had perished. In this place they built and endowed a hospital, where they abode in the truest contrition of heart. Now all who had occasion to pass that river constantly visited them, and great numbers of poor people were received within the place. Many years glided by, and, at last, on a very cold night, about the mid-hour, as Julian slept, overpowered with fatigue, a lamentable voice seemed to call his name. He instantly got up, and found a man covered with the leprosy, perish-

ing for very cold. He brought him into the house, and lighted a fire to warm him; but he could not be made warm. That he might omit no possible means of cherishing the leper, he carried him into his own bed, and endeavoured by the heat of his body to restore him. After a while, he who seemed sick, and cold, and leprous, appeared enveloped in an immortal splendour: and waving his light wings, seemed ready to mount up into heaven. Turning a look of the utmost benignity upon his wondering host, he said, "Julian, the Lord hath sent me to thee, to announce the acceptance of thy contrition. Before long both thou and thy partner will sleep in the Lord." So saying, the angelic messenger disappeared. Julian and his wife, after a short time fully occupied in good works, died in peace. (18)

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the knight Julian is any good Christian prelate, who ought manfully to war

against the devil, the world, and the flesh; and to hunt,—that is, to acquire souls for the service of God. He should flee from the world, and he will then receive the lady Castellan in marriage—that is, divine grace. The parents are the vanities of this life, which pursue a man every where : *these* parents must be slain with the sabre of repentance. The river is the Holy Scriptures ; and the hospital by its side, is prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.

TALE XIX.

OF THE SIN OF PRIDE.

We read in the Roman annals, (i. e. *Gesta Romanorum*) of a prince called Pompey. He was united to the daughter of a nobleman, whose name was Cæsar. It was agreed be-

tween them to bring the whole world into subjection; and with this view Pompey gave instructions to his associate to possess himself of certain distant fortresses: for the latter being a young man, it became him to be most active and vigilant. In the mean while, Pompey, as the chief person of the commonwealth, endeavoured to guard it against the machinations of their enemies; and appointed a particular day for the return of Cæsar—in failure of which, his property was to be confiscated to the use of the Roman empire. Five years were allowed him; and Cæsar, assembling a large army, marched rapidly into the country he was about to attack. But the inhabitants being warlike, and aware of his approach, he was unable to subdue them in the specified time. Caring, therefore, to offend Pompey, less than to relinquish his conquests, he continued abroad considerably beyond the five years; and was consequently banished the empire, and his wealth appropriated by the government. When Cæsar had concluded the campaign he turned towards Rome, marching with his forces

across a river, distinguished by the name of Rubicon. Here a phantom of immense stature, standing in the middle of the water, opposed his passage. It said, "Cæsar, if your purpose be the welfare of the state—pass on; but if not, beware how you advance another step." Cæsar replied, "I have long fought for, and am still prepared to undergo every hardship in defence of Rome; of which I take the gods whom I worship to be my witnesses." As he said this, the phantom vanished. Cæsar then turning a little to the right, crossed the river; but having effected his passage, he paused on the opposite bank:—"I have rashly promised peace;" said he, "for in this case, I must relinquish my just right." From that hour he pursued Pompey with the utmost virulence, even to the death; and was himself slain afterwards by a band of conspirators. (19)

APPLICATION.

My beloved, by Pompey understand the Creator of all things; Cæsar signifies Adam,

who was the first man. His daughter is the soul, betrothed to God. Adam was placed in Paradise to cultivate and to guard it; but not fulfilling the condition imposed upon him, like Cæsar, he was expelled his native country. The Rubicon is baptism, by which mankind re-enters a state of blessedness.

TALE XX.

OF TRIBULATION AND ANGUISH.

In the reign of the Emperor Conrad, there lived a certain Count called Leopold, who for some cause, fearing the indignation of his master, fled with his wife into the woods, and concealed himself in a miserable hovel. By chance the Emperor hunted there; and being carried away by the heat of the chace, lost himself in the woods, and was benighted.

Wandering about in various directions, he came at length to the cottage where the Count dwelt, and requested shelter. Now his hostess being at that time pregnant, and near the moment of her travail, prepared, though with some difficulty, a meal, and brought whatever he required. The same night she was delivered of a son. While the Emperor slept, a voice broke upon his ear, which seemed to say, "Take, Take, Take." He arose immediately, and with considerable alarm, said to himself, "What can that voice mean? 'Take! Take! Take!' What am I to take?" He reflected upon the singularity of this for a short space, and then fell asleep. But a second time, the voice addressed him, crying out, "Restore, Restore, Restore." He awoke in very great sorrow. "What is all this?" thought he. "First, I was to 'Take, Take, Take,' and there is nothing for me to take. Just now the same voice exclaimed, 'Restore, Restore, Restore,' and what can I restore when I have taken nothing?" Unable to explain the mystery, he again slept; and the third time, the voice spoke. "Fly, Fly, Fly," it said, "for a child

is now born, who shall become thy son-in-law." These words created great perplexity in the emperor; and getting up very early in the morning, he sought out two of his squires, and said, "Go and force away that child from its mother; cleave it in twain, and bring its heart to me." The squires obeyed, and snatched away the boy, as it hung at its mother's breast. But observing its very great beauty, they were moved to compassion, and placed it upon the branch of a tree, to secure it from the wild beasts; and then killing a hare, they conveyed its heart to the emperor. Soon after this, a duke travelling in the forest, passed by, and hearing the cry of an infant, searched about; and discovering it, placed it, unknown to any one, in the folds of his garment. Having no child himself, he conveyed it to his wife, and bade her nourish it as their own. The lady, pleased to execute so charitable an office, became much attached to the little foundling, whom she called Henry. The boy grew up, handsome in person and extremely eloquent; so that he became a general favourite. Now the emperor remarking the

extraordinary quickness of the youth, desired his foster-father to send him to court; where he resided a length of time. But the great estimation in which he was held by all ranks of people, caused the emperor to repent what he had done; and to fear lest he should aspire to the throne, or probably be the same, whom, as a child, he had commanded his squires to destroy. Wishing to secure himself from every possible turn of fortune, he wrote a letter with his own hand to the Queen to the following purport, "I command you, on pain of death, as soon as this letter reaches you, to put the young man to death." When it was completed, he went, by some accident into the chapel-royal, and seating himself upon a bench, fell asleep. The letter had been inclosed in a purse, which hung loosely from his girdle; and a certain priest of the place, impelled by an ungovernable curiosity, opened the purse and read the purposed wickedness. Filled with horror and indignation, he cunningly erased the passage commanding the youth's death, and wrote instead, "Give him our daughter in marriage." The writing was con-

veyed to the queen, who finding the emperor's signature, and the impression of the royal signet, called together the princes of the empire, and celebrated their nuptials with great pomp. When this was communicated to the emperor, who had quitted the palace, as well to give better opportunity for effecting his atrocious design, as to remove the stigma of its execution from himself, he was greatly afflicted: but when he heard the whole chain of miraculous interposition from the two squires, the duke, and the priest, he saw that he must resign himself to the dispensations of God. And, therefore, sending for the young man, he confirmed his marriage, and appointed him heir to his kingdom. (20)

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the emperor is God the Father; who, angry with our first parents, drove them from Paradise into the woods, and desolate places of life. The child who was born is Jesus Christ, whom many persecute; but who will finally triumph over all his enemies. The

squires, are the divine power and grace operating upon the heart. The child is placed in a tree—that is, in the church; and the duke, who preserved it, is any good prelate. The slain hare, is our carnal affections, which ought to be destroyed. The letter which the emperor wrote with his own hand, is every evil imagination which possesses the heart. For then Christ is in danger of being destroyed. The priest who preserved the youth, is any discreet minister, who by means of the Sacred Writings mollifies the asperities of the human soul, and betroths it to Heaven.

TALE XXI.

OF OVER-REACHING AND CONSPIRACY, AND OF CAUTION OPPOSED TO THEM.

JUSTIN records, (21) that the Lacedæmonians conspired against their king; and prevailing,

banished him. It happened that a king of the Persians plotted the destruction of the same state, and prepared to besiege Lacedæmon with a large army. The exile, though smarting beneath the wrongs accumulated on him by his own subjects, could not but regard the land of his nativity ; and feel for it that deep and rooted love which forms, as it were, the very existence of the real patriot. Having ascertained, therefore, the hostile designs of the Persian monarch against the Lacedæmonians, he reflected by what means he might securely forewarn them of the impending danger. Accordingly, taking up his tablets, he communicated his discovery, and explained how they might best resist and defeat their enemies.

When he had written, he enveloped the whole in wax, and finding a trust-worthy messenger, despatched him to the insurgent nobles. On inspection of the tablets, no writing could be distinguished ; for the entire surface of the wax discovered not the slightest impression. This naturally gave rise to much discussion, and each delivered his opinion as to the intent and further disposal of the tablets. But the

mystery none of them could unravel. Now it chanced that a sister of the Lacedæmonian king, understanding their perplexity, requested permission to inspect them. Her desire was admitted; she commenced a minute investigation, and assisted by that peculiar shrewdness, which women frequently display in emergencies, raised the wax, and a portion of the writing became manifest. She had now a clue, and proceeding in her work, gradually removed the waxen covering and exhibited the legend at full. The nobles of the council thus pre-monished, rejoiced exceedingly; took the necessary steps, and secured themselves against the menaced siege.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the king, is Christ, who is banished, by human depravity, from his right. Nevertheless, he so loved us, as to contrive a means of freeing us from the attacks of our enemy the devil.

TALE XXII.

OF WORLDLY FEAR.

Augustine tells us, that when the Egyptians formerly deified Isis and Serapis, they proceeded in this manner. First, they made a law, that whosoever declared them to be mortal, or so much as expressed a doubt relative to their birth, should be put to an ignominious death. Then they erected two images; and that the aforesaid law should be strictly observed, they placed near them, in every temple dedicated to their honour, another of diminutive form, having a fore-finger laid upon its lips,—to indicate that silence was indispensably required of those who entered their temples. In this way they endeavoured to repress the promulgation of truth.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, these Egyptians are all worldly-minded men, who would deify and worship their vices, while they sedulously hide truth from the heart. The smaller image, is *Fear of the world,* which is ever instrumental in the suppression of truth.

TALE XXIII.

OF SPIRITUAL MEDICINE.

Saint Augustine relates, that an ancient custom formerly prevailed, in compliance with which, emperors, after death, were laid upon a funeral pile and burnt ; and their ashes deposited in an urn. But it happened that one of them died, whose heart resisted the impression of fire. This circumstance created

the utmost astonishment, and all the rhetoricians, and other wise men of every province, were summoned to one place. The question was then proposed to them, and they thus answered: "The Emperor died intoxicated, and through the influence of a latent poison, his heart cannot be consumed." When this was understood, they drew the heart from the fire, and covered it with *theriaque* (22) and immediately the poison was expelled. The heart, being returned to the flames, was soon reduced to ashes.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, men are thus in a spiritual sense. The heart is impoisoned, and then the fire of the Holy Ghost will not touch it. The *theriaque* is repentance, which removes all transgressions.

TALE XXIV.

OF THE SUGGESTIONS OF THE DEVIL.

There was a celebrated magician, who had a very beautiful garden, in which grew flowers of the most fragrant smell, and fruits of the most delicious flavour. In short, nothing on earth could exceed it. But he invariably refused admittance to all except to fools, or such as were his enemies. When suffered to pass in, however, their wonder was extreme; and few having entered it wished to return. On the contrary, the delights which they experienced, so infatuated their minds, that they easily yielded to the demands of the magician, and resigned their inheritances to him without the slightest reserve. The fools, of course, believing it to be Paradise, and that the flowers and fruits were of immortal growth,

while they themselves were the chosen and happy possessors of the land, gave not another thought to the future. They luxuriated in voluptuousness, and surrendered the whole heart to impure gratification. The consequence was, that in a moment of sensual intoxication, the magician cut them off; and thus, through the instrumentality of a factitious Eden, perpetrated the foulest enormities. (23)

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the magician is the world. It supplies what is called wealth; and this, when men have obtained, they close their hand upon it, and believe themselves rich. Presently they open their hands, and the treasure has disappeared. (24)

TALE XXV.

OF INGRATITUDE.

A CERTAIN noble lady suffered many injuries from a tyrannical king, who laid waste her domains. When the particulars of it were communicated to her, her tears flowed fast, and her heart was oppressed with bitterness. It happened that a pilgrim visited her, and remained there for some time. Observing the poverty to which she had been reduced, and feeling compassion for her distresses, he offered to make war in her defence; on condition that, if he fell in battle, his staff and scrip should be retained in her private chamber, as a memorial of his valour, and of her gratitude. She faithfully promised compliance with his wishes; and the pilgrim, hastening to attack the tyrant, obtained a splendid victory. But

in the heat of the contest, he was transfixed by an arrow, which occasioned his death. The lady aware of this, did as she promised: the staff and scrip were suspended in her chamber. Now, when it was known that she had recovered all her lost possessions, three kings made large preparations to address, and, as they hoped, incline her to become the wife of one of them. The lady, forewarned of the intended honour, adorned herself with great care, and walked forth to meet them. They were received according to their dignity; and whilst they remained with her, she fell into some perplexity, and said to herself, "If these three kings enter my chamber, it will disgrace me to suffer the pilgrim's staff and scrip to remain there." She commanded them to be taken away; and thus forgot her vows, and plainly evinced her ingratitude.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the lady is the human soul, and the tyrant is the devil, who spoils us of our heavenly inheritance. The pilgrim is

Christ, who fights for and redeems us; but, forgetful of his services, we receive the devil, the world, and the flesh, into the chamber of our souls, and put away the memorials of our Saviour's love.

TALE XXVI.

OF HUMILITY.

There was a queen who dishonoured herself with a servant, and bore him a son. This son, on arriving at years of maturity, practised every description of wickedness, and conducted himself with the greatest insolence toward the prince, his reputed father. The prince, unable to account for such perversion of mind, interrogated the mother as to the legitimacy of her child; and finding, by her reluctant confession, that he was not his son, though

loth to deprive him of the kingdom, he ordained that his dress, for the time to come, should be of a different texture and colour; one side to be composed of the most ordinary materials, and the other of the most valuable; so that when he looked upon the baser portion, his pride might be abated, and the vicious propensities, in which he had indulged, relinquished; on the other hand, when he surveyed the more gorgeous part, his hopes might be raised, and his spirit animated to goodness. By this judicious device, he became remarkable for humility, and ever after abandoned his dishonest life.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the queen is any one who commits a mortal sin. The worthless side of the garment is our fleshly substance; the other is the soul by which man is classed with the beings of heaven, and aspires to an immortal existence.

TALE XXVII.

OF JUST RECOMPENCE.

A VERY rich and powerful emperor had an only daughter of uncommon beauty. She was consigned to the care of five soldiers, who were commanded to be constantly in arms; and every day a stated sum was paid them out of the king's treasury. This emperor had a seneschal whom he greatly favoured; and a valuable but ferocious dog, which it was necessary to confine with triple chains. It happened, that as the emperor lay in bed, he formed a resolution to proceed to the Holy Land; and in the morning, when he arose, sent for the seneschal, and said, "I am about to undertake an expedition to Palestine; to your vigilance I commit my only daughter with the soldiers of her guard. The

dog, likewise, which I specially value, I entrust to your care; and, on pain of instant death, let there be no deficiency in attendance upon my daughter. You shall supply the soldiers with all that they require; but observe that the dog is securely chained, and fed sparingly, so that his ferocity may abate." The seneschal approved of all the emperor's injunctions, and promised faithfully to comply with them; instead of which he acted in direct opposition. The dog was fed with the most unsuitable food, and not guarded as he ought to have been. He diminished the comforts, and even denied the necessaries of life to the lady. He robbed the soldiers of their pay, who being needy and unemployed, roamed over the country in great distress. As for the poor girl, forsaken and destitute, she passed from her chamber into the court-yard of the hall which she occupied, and seating herself upon the pavement, gave free course to her sorrows. Now the dog, whose savage nature improper aliment had augmented, burst, by a sudden and violent movement from the bonds that enchained him, and tore

her limb from limb. When this afflicting circumstance was known in the kingdom, it excited universal regret. Messengers were immediately despatched to the emperor, who hastened his return with all possible expedition. The seneschal was summoned before him, and asked categorically why the lady was unprovided for, the soldiers unpaid, and the dog improperly fed, contrary to his express command. But the man was unable to answer, and offered not the least excuse. The torturers, therefore, were called in; he was bound hand and foot, and thrown into a red-hot furnace. The emperor's decree gave satisfaction to the whole empire. (25)

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the emperor is our Lord Jesus Christ; the fair daughter is the human soul; the five soldiers are the five senses, and the dog is carnal affections, which disturb and slay the spirit. The triple chain is love to God—the fear of offending him, and shame

when we have done so. The seneschal is any man to whom the care of the senses, and the guardianship of the soul is committed.

TALE XXVIII.

OF THE EXECRABLE DEVICES OF OLD WOMEN.

In the kingdom of a certain empress there lived a soldier who was happily espoused to a noble, chaste, and beautiful wife. It happened that he was called upon to take a long journey, and previous to his departure he said to the lady—" I leave you no guard but your own discretion ; I believe it to be wholly sufficient." He then embarked with his attendants. Pleased with the confidence reposed in her, she continued at her own mansion, in the daily practice of every virtue. A

short period had elapsed, when the urgent entreaties of a neighbour prevailed with her to appear at a festival; where, amongst other guests, was a youth, upon whom the excellence and beauty of the lady made a deep impression. He became violently enamoured of her, and despatched various emissaries to declare his passion, and win her to approve his suit. But the virtuous lady received his advances with the utmost scorn, and vehemently reproached him for his dishonesty. This untoward repulse greatly disconcerted the youth, and his health daily declined. It chanced, that on one occasion he went sorrowfully towards the church; and, upon the way, an old woman accosted him, who by pretended sanctity had long obtained an undue share of reverence and regard. She demanded the cause of the youth's apparent uneasiness. " It will nothing profit thee to know," said he. " But," replied the old woman, " it may be much to your advantage: discover the wound, and it is not impossible but a remedy may be procured. With the aid of Heaven it may easily be effected—shew it me." Thus

urged, the youth made known to her his love for the lady. "Is that all?" said the beldam—"return to your home, I will find a medicine that shall presently relieve you." Confiding in her assurances, he went his way, and the other commenced her devices.

It seems she possessed a little dog, which she had accustomed to fast for two successive days; on the third, she made bread of the flour of mustard, and placed it before the pining animal. As soon as it had tasted the bread, the pungent bitterness caused the water to spring into its eyes, and the whole of that day tears flowed copiously from them. The old woman, accompanied by her dog, posted to the house of the lady whom the young man loved; and the opinion entertained of her sanctity secured her an honourable and gracious reception. As they sat together, the lady noticed the weeping dog, and was curious to ascertain the cause. The crone told her not to inquire, for that it involved a calamity too dreadful to communicate. Such a remark, naturally enough, excited still more the curiosity of the fair questioner, and she

earnestly pressed her to detail the story. This was what the old hag wanted; and, assuming a hypocritical whine, she said, "That little dog was my daughter—too good and excellent for this world. She was beloved by a young man, who, thrown into despair by her cruelty, perished for her love. My daughter, as a punishment for her hard-hearted conduct, was suddenly changed into the little dog, respecting which you inquire." Saying these words, a few crocodile tears started into her eyes; and she continued, "Alas! how often does this mute memorial recall my lost daughter, once so beautiful and virtuous: now—oh, what is she now? degraded from the state of humanity, she exists only to pine away in wretchedness, and waste her life in tears. She can receive no comfort; and they who would administer it, can but weep for her distresses, which surely are without a parallel." The lady, astonished and terrified at what she heard, secretly exclaimed—"Alas! I too am beloved; and he who loves me is in like manner at the point of death"—and then, instigated by her fears, discovered the whole

circumstance to the old woman, who immediately answered, " Beautiful lady, do not disregard the anguish of this young man : look upon my unhappy daughter, and be warned in time. As she is, you may be." " Oh !" returned the credulous lady, " my good mother, counsel me ; what would you have me do ? Not for worlds would I become as she is." " Why then," answered the treacherous old woman, " send directly for the youth, and give him the love he covets—thus, you will prevent his death, and your own irremediable calamity." The lady blushed, and said, " May I entreat your holiness to fetch him : there might be some scandal circulated if another went." " My dear daughter," said she, " I suffer with you, and will presently bring him hither."—She did so ; but in the night the husband returned, and put the whole party to a shameful death. Thus, did the wicked project of an old woman involve many i uin. (26)

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the soldier is Christ; the wife is the soul—to which God gave free will. It is invited to the feast of carnal pleasures, where a youth—that is, the vanity of the world, becomes enamoured of it. The old woman is the devil; the dog, the hope of a long life, and the presumptuous belief of God's clemency, which lead us to deceive and soothe the soul. But Christ will come during the night, and condemn the sinner to death.

TALE XXIX.

OF CORRUPT JUDGMENT.

An emperor established a law that every judge convicted of a partial administration

of justice, should undergo the severest penalties. It happened that a certain judge, bribed by a large sum, gave a notoriously corrupt decision. This circumstance reaching the ears of the emperor, he commanded him to be flayed. The sentence was immediately executed, and the skin of the culprit nailed upon the seat of judgment, as an awful warning to others to avoid a similar offence. The emperor afterwards bestowed the same dignity upon the son of the deceased judge, and on presenting the appointment, said,—"Thou wilt sit to administer justice upon the skin of thy delinquent sire: should any one incite thee to do evil, remember his fate; look down upon the coverture of the judgment-seat; there thou wilt find matter to uphold thy falling virtue, and prevent the commission of an unjust act."

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the emperor is Christ; the unjust judge is any evil man, who ought to

be excoriated—that is, stripped of all bad dispositions and humours. The skin nailed to the seat of judgment, is Christ's passion, which is a memorial to us of what our conduct should be.

TALE XXX.

OF OFFENCE AND JUDGMENT.

A CERTAIN king determined on the occasion of some victory to appoint three especial honours, and an equal number of disagreeable accompaniments. The first of the honors was, that the people should meet the conqueror with acclamations and every other testimony of pleasure. The second, that all the captives, bound hand and foot, should attend the victor's chariot. The third honour was, that, enwrapped in the mantle of Jupiter,

he should sit upon a triumphal car, drawn by four white horses, and be thus brought to the capitol. But lest these exalted rewards should swell the heart, and make the favourite of fortune forget his birth and mortal character, three grievances were attached to them. First, a slave sat on his right hand in the chariot—which served to hint, that poverty and unmerited degradation were no bars to the subsequent attainment of the highest dignities. The second grievance was, that the slave should inflict upon him several severe blows, to abate the haughtiness which the applause of his countrymen might tend to excite—at the same time saying to him in Greek, "Γνωθε σεαυτον," that is, *know thyself*, and permit not thy exaltation to render thee proud. Look behind thee, and remember that thou art mortal. The third grievance was this, that free licence was given, upon that day of triumph, to utter the most galling reproaches, and the most cutting sarcasms. (27)

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APPLICATION.

My beloved, the emperor is our heavenly Father, and the conqueror, our Lord Jesus Christ, who has obtained a glorious victory over sin. The first honor typifies his entry into Jerusalem, when the people shouted "Hosanna to the Son of David." The second, those enslaved by sin. The third, Christ's divinity. The four white horses are the four Evangelists. The slave, is the worst of the two robbers crucified with our Lord. The second grievance is the blows he received; and the third, the indignities with which he was overwhelmed.

TALE XXXI.

OF THE RIGOR OF DEATH.

We read, that at the death of Alexander, a golden sepulchre was constructed, and that a

number of philosophers assembled round it. One said—"Yesterday, Alexander made a treasure of gold; and now gold makes a treasure of him." Another observed—"Yesterday, the whole world was not enough to satiate his ambition; to-day, three or four ells of cloth are more than sufficient." A third said—"Yesterday, Alexander commanded the people; to-day the people command him." Another said—"Yesterday, Alexander could enfranchise thousands; to-day he cannot free himself from the bonds of death." Another remarked—"Yesterday, he pressed the earth; to-day it oppresses him." "Yesterday," continued another, "all men feared Alexander; to-day men repute him nothing." Another said, "Yesterday, Alexander had a multitude of friends; to-day, not one." Another said, "Yesterday, Alexander led on an army; to-day, that army bears him to the grave."

APPLICATION.

My beloved, any one may be called Alexander who is rich and worldly-minded; and

to him may the observations of the philosophers be truly applied.

TALE XXXII.

OF GOOD INSPIRATION.

Seneca mentions, that in poisoned bodies, on account of the malignancy and coldness of the poison, no worm will engender; but if the body be struck with lightning, in a few days it will be full of them. (28)

APPLICATION.

My beloved, men are poisoned by sin, and then they produce no worm, that is, no virtue; but struck with lightning, that is, *by the grace of God,* they are fruitful in good works.

TALE XXXIII.

OF HANGING.

VALERIUS tells us, that a man named Paletinus one day burst into a flood of tears; and calling his son and his neighbours around him, said, "Alas! alas! I have now growing in my garden a fatal tree, on which my first poor wife hung herself, then my second, and after that my third. Have I not therefore cause for the wretchedness I exhibit?" "Truly," said one who was called Arrius, "I marvel that you should weep at such an unusual instance of good fortune! Give me, I pray you, two or three sprigs of that gentle tree, which I will divide with my neighbours, and thereby afford every man an opportunity of indulging the laudable wishes of his spouse." Paletinus complied with his friend's request;

and ever after found this remarkable tree the most productive part of his estate. (29)

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the tree is the cross of Christ. The man's three wives are, pride, lusts of the heart, and lusts of the eyes, which ought to be thus suspended and destroyed. He who solicited a part of the tree is any good Christian.

TALE XXXIV.

OF CONSIDERATION OF LIFE.

We read that Alexander the Great was the disciple of Aristotle, from whose instructions he derived the greatest advantage. Amongst other important matters, he enquired of his master, what would profit himself, and at the same time be serviceable to others. Aristotle

answered, "My son, hear with attention; and if you retain my counsel, you will arrive at the greatest honors. There are seven distinct points to be regarded. First, that you do not overcharge the balance. Secondly, that you do not feed a fire with the sword. Thirdly, carp not at the crown; nor, Fourthly, eat the heart of a little bird. Fifthly, when you have once commenced a proper undertaking, never turn from it. Sixthly, walk not in the high road; and Seventhly, do not allow a prating swallow to possess your eaves."—The King carefully considered the meaning of these enigmatical directions; and observing them, experienced their utility in his subsequent life. (30)

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the balance is human life; do not overcharge it, but weigh every thing accurately, and deliberate upon what you do. As in the fable of the vulture. A vulture swooping upon her prey, struck it with her talons. After it was killed, she first endeavoured to carry off the whole; but finding

this beyond her power, she tore off as much as she could fly away with, and left the remainder behind. " Do not feed a fire with the sword,"—that is, provoke not anger with sharp words. " Carp not at the crown,"—that is, respect the established laws. " Eat not the heart of a little bird," which being weak and timid, becomes not the condition of a Christian man. " When you have commenced a befitting design, do not turn from it,"—and especially having begun repentance, persevere to the end. A viper, wishing to espouse a kind of eel called the lamprey, was rejected by the latter, because of the poison it conveyed. The viper, determining to carry its object, retired to a secret place and cast up the venom; but after the nuptials were solemnized, went back to the place where the virus was deposited, and resumed the whole. In like manner do all sinners. They are awhile penitent, but soon return to their vomit—that is, to their sins. " Walk not by the high road,"—which is the road of death. " Permit not a prating swallow to possess your eaves,"—that is, suffer not sin to dwell upon thy heart.

TALE XXXV.

OF PEACE, REFORMATION, &c.

In the Roman annals, we read that it was customary, when peace was established between noblemen who had been at variance, to ascend a lofty mountain, and take with them a lamb, which they sacrificed in pledge of complete re-union; thereby intimating, that as they then poured forth the blood of the lamb, so should his blood be poured forth, who infringed the smallest article of that solemn compact.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the noblemen are God and man; and the lamb is Christ.

TALE XXXVI.

OF THE COURSE OF HUMAN LIFE.

We are told of a certain King, who, beyond all other things, wished to make himself acquainted with the nature of man. Now, in a remote part of his kingdom, there dwelt a famous philosopher, by whose great science many surprising mysteries were expounded. When the King heard of his celebrity, he despatched a messenger to him to command his immediate appearance at court. The philosopher willingly complied with the King's wish, and commenced his journey. On reaching the palace, the royal enquirer thus addressed him: "Master, I have heard much of your extraordinary wisdom, and profound research into natural phenomena. I would myself bear testimony to the truth of the

general report. In the first place, tell me what is man?" The philosopher answered, —" Man is a wretched thing: this is his beginning, middle, and end. There is no truth so apparent; and therefore Job said, ' Man that is born of a woman is full of miseries.' Look upon him at his birth; he is poor and powerless. In the middle period of his life, you will find the world attacking him, narrowing his comforts, and contributing to the eternal reprobation of his soul. If you review the end, you will mark the earth opening to receive him—it closes, and he is gone! And then, oh King! what becomes of the pomp of your regal establishment—of the pride of your worldly glory?"—" Master," said the King, " I will ask you four questions, which if you resolve well and wisely, I will elevate you to wealth and honor. My first demand is, What is man? My second, What is he like? The third, Where he is? and the fourth, With whom he is associated?" The philosopher replied, " At your first question, my lord, I cannot but laugh. You ask, ' What is man?' —Why, what is he but the slave of death—

the guest of a day—a traveller hastily journeying to a distant land? He is a slave, because he is subject to the bonds of the tomb; death fetters him, sweeps off from the scene, even the memorials of his name, and causes his days to drop away, like the leaves in autumn. But, according to his desert, will he be rewarded or punished. Again, man is the 'guest of a day,' for he lingers a few short hours, and then oblivion covers him as with a garment. He is also a 'traveller journeying to a distant land.' He passes on, sleepless and watchful, with scarce a moment given him to snatch the means of subsistence, and discharge the relative duties of his station. Death hurries him away. How much, therefore, are we called upon to provide every requisite for the journey—that is, the virtues which beseem and support the Christian. To your second question, 'What man is like?' I answer, that he resembles a sheet of ice, which the heat of noon certainly and rapidly dissolves. Thus man, mixed up of gross and elementary particles, by the fervor of his own infirmities, quickly falls into corruption.

Moreover, he is like an apple hanging upon its parent stem. The exterior is fair, and promises a rich maturity—but there is a worm preying silently within: ere long it drops to the earth, perforated and rotten at the core*. Whence, then, arises human pride?—The third query is, 'Where is man?' I reply, in a state of multifarious war, for he has to contend against the world, the flesh, and the devil. Your fourth demand was, 'With whom is he associated?' With seven troublesome companions, which continually beset and torment him. These are, hunger, thirst, heat, cold, weariness, infirmity, and death. Arm, therefore, the soul against the devil, the world, and the flesh, whose wars are divers seductive temptations. Various preparations are needful for an effectual resistance. The flesh tempts us with voluptuousness; the world, by the gratifications of vanity—and the devil, by the suggestions of pride. If, then, the flesh

* "An evil soul, producing holy witness,
Is like a villain with a smiling cheek;
A goodly apple rotten at the heart."
SHAKSPEARE, *Merch. of Venice*, Act I. Sc. 3.

tempt thee, remember, that though the day and the hour be unknown, it must soon return into its primitive dust; and, remember yet more, that eternal punishment awaits thy dereliction from virtue. So, in the second chapter of the book of Wisdom, 'Our body shall become dust and ashes.' It follows, that after these passages of mortal life, oblivion shall be our portion—we, and our deeds, alike shall be forgotten. The recollection of this, will often oppose a barrier to temptation, and prevent its clinging with fatal tenacity to the heart. If the vanity of the world allure thee, reflect upon its ingratitude, and thou wilt be little desirous of becoming bound to it. And though thou shouldest dedicate thy whole life to its service, it will permit thee to carry off nothing but thy sins. This may be exemplified by the fable of the partridge. A partridge, anxious for the safety of her young, on the approach of a sportsman, ran before him, feigning herself wounded, in order to draw him from her nest. The sportsman, crediting this appearance, eagerly followed. But she lured him on, until he had entirely lost sight

of the nest, and then rapidly flew away. Thus the sportsman, deceived by the bird's artifice, obtained only his labour for his pains. (31) So is it with the world. The sportsman who approaches the nest, is the good Christian, who acquires food and clothing by the sweat of his brow. The world calls, and holds out the temptation, which his frailty cannot resist. She tells him that if he follow her, he will attain the desire of his heart. Thus he is gradually removed from the love of God, and from works of goodness. Death comes and bears on his pale steed the deceived and miserable bankrupt. See how the world rewards its votaries! (32) So, in the second Chapter of James, "The whole world is placed in evil; is composed of the pride of life," &c. In the third place, if the devil tempt thee, remember Christ's sorrows and sufferings,—a thought which pride cannot surely resist. "Put on," says the Apostle, "the whole armour of God, that ye may stand fast." Solinus (33) tells us (speaking of the wonders of the world) that Alexander had a certain horse which he called Bucephalus. When this animal was

armed, and prepared for battle, he would permit no one but Alexander to mount; and if another attempted it, he presently threw him. But in the trappings of peace, he made no resistance, mount him who would. Thus a man, armed by the passion of our Lord, receives none into his heart but God; and if the temptations of the devil strive to sit there, they are cast violently down. Without this armour, it is open to every temptation. Let us then study to clothe ourselves with virtue that we may at length come to the glory of God.

TALE XXXVII.

OF LIFTING UP THE MIND TO HEAVEN.

PLINY (34) mentions the story of an eagle that had built her nest upon a lofty rock,

whose young a kind of serpent called *Perna* (35) attempted to destroy. But finding that they were beyond her reach, she stationed herself to windward and emitted a large quantity of poisonous matter, so as to infect the atmosphere and poison the young birds. But the eagle, led by the unerring power of instinct, took this precaution. She fetched a peculiar sort of stone called *Achates,* (36) which she deposited in that quarter of the nest, which was opposite to the wind; and the stone, by virtue of certain occult properties which it possessed, prevented the malicious intentions of the serpent from taking effect.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the eagle is any man of quick perception and aspiring mind. The young birds are good works, which the devil—that is, the serpent—endeavours to destroy by temptation. The rock on which the eagle built, is Christ.

TALE XXXVIII.

OF THE PRECAUTION NECESSARY TO PREVENT ERROR.

In the reign of the emperor Henry II., a certain city was besieged by its enemies. Before they had reached its walls, a dove alighted in the city, around whose neck a letter was suspended which bore the following inscription. "The generation of dogs is at hand; it will prove a quarrelsome breed; procure aid, and defend yourselves resolutely against it."

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the dove is the Holy Spirit, which thus descended on Christ.

TALE XXXIX.

OF RECONCILIATION BETWEEN GOD AND MAN.

The Roman annals say, such discord existed between two brothers, that one of them maliciously laid waste the lands of the other. The emperor Julius (37) having heard of this, determined to punish the offender capitally. The latter, therefore, understanding what was meditated, went to the brother whom he had injured, and besought forgiveness; at the same time requesting that he would screen him from the emperor's vengeance. But they who were present at the interview, rebuked him, and declared that he deserved punishment not pardon. To which he made the following reply. "That prince is not worthy of

regard who in war assumes the gentleness of a lamb, but in peace puts on the ferocity of a lion*. Although my brother should not incline towards me, yet will I endeavour to conciliate him. For the injury I did him is sufficiently avenged in my repentance and bitterness of heart." This view of the case appeased the emperor, and restored peace between himself and his brother.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, these two brothers are the sons of God and man; between whom there is discord as often as man commits a mortal sin. The emperor is God.

* "In peace, there's nothing so becomes a man,
As modest stillness and humility:
But when the blast of war blows in our ears,
Then imitate the action of the tiger."
SHAKSPEARE, *Hen. V.* Act III. Sc. 1.

TALE XL.

OF THE MEASURE OF TEMPTATION, AND OF SKILL.

Macrobius relates, (38) that a certain soldier, in consequence of something he had witnessed, suspected his wife of transferring her affections from himself to another. He interrogated her on the subject, but she vehemently and loudly denied it. Not satisfied with her asseverations, the soldier enquired for a cunning clerk; and having found such as he wanted, he proposed to him the question which disturbed his rest. The clerk answered, "Unless I am permitted to see and converse with the lady, I cannot take upon me to decide." "I pray you, then," said the soldier, "dine with me to-day, and I will give you

the opportunity you require." Accordingly the clerk went to the soldier's house to dinner. The meal being concluded, our clerk entered into conversation with the suspected lady, and spoke to her on various topics. This done, he took hold of her hand; and, as if accidentally, pressed his finger upon her pulse. Then, in a careless tone, adverting to the person whom she was presumed to love, her pulse immediately quickened to a surprizing degree, and acquired a feverish heat. By and by the clerk mentioned her husband, and spoke of him in much the same way as he had done of the other; when the motion of her pulse abated, and its heat was entirely lost. Whereby he plainly perceived that her affections were alienated; and, moreover, that they were placed upon the very person respecting whom she had been accused. Thus, by the management of a learned clerk, the soldier ascertained the truth of his suspicion.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the soldier is Christ, who, having warred in our behalf against the devil, was joined to the soul in baptism, which is emblemed by the wife. That wife too often regards another—that is, the world. As the motion of the pulse revealed the lady's attachment, so does the beating of the heart, our love of worldly vanities.

TALE XLI.

OF THE CONQUESTS AND CHARITY OF OUR LORD.

Cosdras, king of the Athenians, (39) having declared war against the Dorians, assembled

an army, and despatched messengers to the oracle of Apollo, to ascertain the fortune of the engagement. The god answered, " that the party whose chief fell by the sword of the enemy, should win the field." The Dorians, also, understanding the response of the oracle, strictly enjoined their soldiers to spare the life of Cosdras; but the king, disguising himself in the habit of a slave, cut his way into the heart of the hostile army. The enemy, perceiving the extreme audacity of a single man, armed only with a sabre, yet fighting valiantly and effectively in the very midst of them, turned all their attack upon the warrior, and with some difficulty slew him. Thus, by a remarkable effort of patriotism, he enabled his country to triumph over its enemies; and his death, on one side so fatal in its consequences, was bewailed not less by the adverse host, than by his own subjects.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, thus did our blessed Lord, by the pre-determined counsel of God, die to libe-

rate mankind from their worst enemies. As Cosdras changed his regal state for the humiliating garb of a servant, so did Christ put on mortality, and by his death triumphed over our demoniacal foes.

TALE XLII.

OF WANT OF CHARITY.

Valerius records, (40) that there once stood in the city of Rome a very lofty column, on which a certain person inscribed four letters, three times repeated. Three P's, three S's, three R's, and three F's. When the letters had attracted attention, he exclaimed, "Woe, woe, to the eternal city." The nobles, hearing what had been done, said to him, "Master, let us understand thy conceit." He an-

swered, the meaning of the inscription is this: "Pater patriæ perditur." [The father of his country is lost.] "Sapientia secum sustollitur." [Wisdom has departed with him.] "Ruunt reges Romæ." [The kings of Rome perish.] "Ferro, flamma, fame." [By the sword, by fire, by famine.] The event afterwards fully approved the veracity of the prediction.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, spiritually speaking, the father of his country is *Charity*, which is the result of love to God; when that is lost, wisdom also departs. Hence, the kings of the earth fall; and the sword, fire, and dearth, devour mankind.

TALE XLIII.

OF CHRIST, WHO, BY HIS PASSION, DELIVERED US FROM HELL.

In the middle of Rome, there was once an immense chasm, which no human efforts could fill up. The gods being questioned relative to this extraordinary circumstance, made answer, "That unless a man could be found who would voluntarily commit himself to the gulf, it would remain unclosed for ever." Proclamations were sent forth, signifying that he who was willing to offer himself a sacrifice for the good of his country, should appear—but not a man ventured to declare himself. At length Marcus Aurelius (41) said, "If ye will permit me to live as I please during the space of one whole year, I will cheerfully surrender myself, at the end of it, to the yawning chasm." The

Romans assented with joy, and Aurelius indulged for that year in every wish of his heart. Then mounting a noble steed, he rode furiously into the abyss, which, with a dreadful crash, immediately closed over him.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, Rome is the world, in the centre of which, before the nativity of Christ, was the gulf of hell, yawning for our immortal souls. Christ plunged into it, and by so doing ransomed the human race.

TALE XLIV.

OF ENVY.

Before Tiberius ascended the throne he was remarkable for his wisdom. His eloquence

was of the most persuasive character, and his military operations invariably successful. But when he became emperor his nature seemed to have undergone a perfect revolution. All martial enterprizes were abandoned, and the nation groaned beneath his relentless and persevering tyranny. He put to death his own sons, and therefore it was not to be expected that he should spare others. The patricians threatened, and the people cursed him. Formerly, he had been noted for temperance; but now he shewed himself the most intemperate of a dissolute age; insomuch that he obtained the surname of Bacchus. (42) It happened that a certain artificer fabricated a plate of glass, which being exhibited to the emperor, he attempted, but ineffectually, to break it. It bent, however, beneath his efforts, and the artificer, applying a hammer and working upon the glass as upon copper, presently restored it to its level. Tiberius inquired by what art this was effected; and the other replied, that it was a secret not to be disclosed. Immediately he was ordered to the block, the emperor alleging, that if such an art should be

practised, gold and silver would be reckoned as nothing. (43)

APPLICATION.

My beloved, Tiberius is any man who in poverty is humble and virtuous, but raised to affluence forgets every honest feeling. The artificer is any poor man who presents the rich with unacceptable gifts.

TALE XLV.

OF THE GOOD, WHO ALONE WILL ENTER THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

There was a wise and rich king who possessed a beloved, but not a loving wife. She had three illegitimate sons who proved ungrateful

and rebellious to their reputed parent*. In due time she brought forth another son, whose legitimacy was undisputed; and after arriving at a good old age, he died, and was buried in the royal sepulchre of his fathers. But the death of the old king caused great strife amongst his surviving sons, about the right of succession. All of them advanced a claim, and none would relinquish it to the other; the three first, presuming upon their priority in birth, and the last upon his legitimacy. In this strait, they agreed to refer the absolute decision of their cause to a certain honourable soldier of the late king. When this person, therefore, heard their difference, he said, "Follow my advice, and it will greatly benefit you. Draw from its sepulchre the body of the deceased monarch; prepare, each of you, a bow and single shaft, and whosoever transfixes the heart of his father, shall obtain the kingdom." The counsel was approved, the body was taken from its repository and bound naked to a tree.

* It is stated in the first book of Herodotus, that the Persians considered a rebellious son undoubtedly illegitimate. This is another strong proof of the oriental structure of these stories. See Tale XXVI.

The arrow of the first son wounded the king's right hand—on which, as if the contest were determined, they proclaimed him heir to the throne. But the second arrow went nearer, and entered the mouth; so that he too considered himself the undoubted lord of the kingdom. However, the third perforated the heart itself, and consequently imagined that his claim was fully decided, and his succession sure. It now came to the turn of the fourth and last son to shoot; but instead of fixing his shaft to the bow-string, and preparing for the trial, he broke forth into a lamentable cry, and with eyes swimming in tears, said, "Oh! my poor father; have I then lived to see you the victim of an impious contest? Thine own offspring lacerate thy unconscious clay?—Far, oh! far be it from me to strike thy venerated form, whether living or dead." No sooner had he uttered these words, than the nobles of the realm, together with the whole people, unanimously elected him to the throne; and depriving the three barbarous wretches of their rank and wealth, expelled them for ever from the kingdom. (44)

*

APPLICATION.

My beloved, that wise and rich king is the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who joined himself to our flesh, as to a beloved wife. But going after other gods, it forgot the love due to him in return, and brought forth by an illicit connection, three sons, viz. Pagans, Jews, and Heretics. The first, wounded the right hand—that is, the doctrine of Christ by persecutions. The second, the mouth—when they gave Christ vinegar and gall to drink; and the third, wounded, and continue to wound the *heart*,—while they strive, by every sophistical objection, to deceive the faithful. The fourth son is any good Christian.

TALE XLVI.

OF MORTAL SINS.

Julius relates, that in the month of May a certain man entered a grove, in which stood seven beautiful trees in leaf. The leaves so much attracted him, that he collected more than he had strength to carry. On this, three men came to his assistance, who led away both the man and the load beneath which he laboured. As he went out he fell into a deep pit, and the extreme weight upon his shoulders sank him to the very bottom.—The same author also relates, in his history of animals, that if, after a crow had built her nest, you wished to hinder her from hatching her eggs, place between the bark and the tree a quantity of pounded glass * ; and as long as it remained in that situation, she would never bring off her young.

* *Cineres; ashes* of glass.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the grove is the world, wherein are many trees, pleasant indeed to the eye, but putting forth only mortal sins. With these, man loads himself. The three men, who brought assistance, are, the devil, the world, and the flesh: the pit is hell.—Again, the crow is the devil; the nest the heart; which he too frequently inhabits. The pounded glass is the remembrance of our latter end: the tree is the soul, and the bark is the human body.

TALE XLVII.

OF THREE KINGS.

A Danish king had the greatest reverence for the three Eastern potentates (45) whom

the star led to Jerusalem on the nativity of our blessed Lord; and he was usually in the habit of invoking them to his aid upon any dilemma. The pious king set out with a great company to the place where the bodies of these sainted kings are preserved with great splendour, taking with him three golden crowns, constructed after a wonderful and royal fashion. As he returned to his own dominions, he fell into a deep sleep; and dreamt that he beheld the three kings bearing upon their heads the crowns he had lately presented, from whence issued a dazzling lustre. Each appeared to address him in turn. The first, and the older of the three said, " My brother, thou hast happily arrived hither, and happily shalt thou return." The next said, " Thou hast offered much, but more shalt thou carry back with thee." The third said, " My brother, thou art faithful: therefore with us shalt thou conjointly reign in heaven for a period of thirty-three years." Then the elder presented to him a pyx (46) filled with gold—" Receive," said he, " a treasury of wisdom, by which thou wilt judge

thy people with equity." The second presented a pyx of myrrh, and said, "Receive the myrrh of prudence, which will bridle the deceitful workings of the flesh: for he best governs, who is master of himself." The third brought a pyx full of frankincense, saying, "Receive the frankincense of devotion and clemency; for thus shalt thou relieve and soothe the wretched. And as the dew moistens the herbage and promotes a large increase of fertility, so the clemency of a king lifts him to the stars." (47) The sleeping monarch, surprised at the distinctness and singularity of his vision, suddenly awoke, and found the pyxes, with their rich contents, deposited by his side. Returning to his own kingdom, he devoutly fulfilled the purport of his dream, and on the conclusion of this transitory life, enjoyed, as he deserved, an everlasting throne.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the Danish king is any good Christian who brings three crowns to three

holy kings—that is, to the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. These crowns are, faith, hope, and charity. The pyx of gold, is a heart full of virtues ; that of myrrh, typifies repentance ; and the pyx of frankincense denotes the Grace of God.

TALE XLVIII.

OF THE END OF SINNERS.

Dionysius records, that when Perillus desired to become an artificer of Phalaris, a cruel and tyrannical king who depopulated the kingdom, and was guilty of many dreadful excesses, he presented to him, already too well skilled in cruelty, a brazen bull, which he had just constructed. In one of its sides there was a secret door, by which those who were sentenced should enter and be burnt to

death. The idea was, that the sounds produced by the agony of the sufferer confined within, should resemble the roaring of a bull; and thus, while nothing human struck the ear, the mind should be unimpressed by a feeling of mercy. The king highly applauded the invention, and said, "Friend, the value of thy industry is yet untried: more cruel even than the people account me, thou thyself shalt be the first victim."—Indeed, there is no law more equitable, than that the artificer of death should perish by his own devices, as Quidius has observed. (48)

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the sufferer is any evil-worker who will finally suffer for the exertion of his iniquitous practices.

TALE XLIX.

OF THE ILLUSIONS OF THE DEVIL.

PAULUS, the historian of the Longobardi (49) relates, that Conan, king of the Hungarians, while besieging a castle in the town of Julius, (50) perceived upon the walls, Rosinella, duchess of that place, a very beautiful and accomplished woman, with her whole family, consisting of four sons and two daughters. He entered into conversation with her, and proposed, that if she would marry him, he would bestow upon her the castle which she was defending. The lady acquiesced; but the sons, indignant at the treacherous conduct of their mother, fled together. Conan, however, adhering to his promise, married the duchess on the following day. But the next morning after the nuptials, he delivered her to twelve

Hungarian soldiers to be abused and mocked; and on the third day, he commanded her to be stabbed, and transfixed from the throat downward, observing, "that a wife who betrayed her country to gratify her evil passions, ought to possess such a husband."

APPLICATION.

My beloved, Conan is the devil, who besieged a castle, that is, the human heart. Rosinella is any woman who wanders from the path of rectitude. The children are those virtues which leave the breast when evil enters; and the Hungarian soldiers are the vices into which it falls.

TALE L.

OF PRAISE DUE TO A JUST JUDGE.

Valerius informs us, that the emperor Zelongus made a law, by which, if any one abused a virgin he should lose both his eyes. It happened that his only son trespassed in this manner with the daughter of a certain widow, who immediately hastened into the presence of the emperor, and spoke thus; "My Lord, you have righteously decreed, that he who defiles a virgin shall lose his sight. Your only son has dishonoured my daughter; command him to be punished." These words greatly distressed the emperor, but he gave instant orders respecting the punishment of his son. On this, two noblemen observed: "The young man is your only child, and heir

to the throne: it were impious, if for this he should lose his eyes." The emperor answered, "Is it not evident to you, that I myself ordained this very law? disgraceful as the occasion is, it may break my heart, but not my resolution. My son has been the first to transgress the law, and therefore, shall be the first to undergo the penalty." "Sire," said the noblemen, "let us implore you, for the sake of Heaven, to forgive the errors of your child." Somewhat subdued by the urgency of their entreaties, the emperor, after a moment's pause, said, "My friends, listen to me: my eyes are the eyes of my son; and his, are in like manner, mine. Pluck out, therefore, my right eye, and let him surrender his left; thus, the law will be satisfied." The paternal affection of the emperor was indulged, and the whole kingdom extolled the prudence and justice of their prince. (51)

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the emperor is Christ; the eyes are divine grace, and eternal happiness,

which he who sinned would have totally lost, had not the compassion and consequent sufferings of the Son of God, meliorated the condign punishment.

TALE LI.

OF EXTORTION.

Josephus mentions, that Tiberius Cæsar, inquiring why the governors of provinces remained so long in office, was answered by an example. "I have seen," said the respondent, "an infirm man covered with ulcers, grievously tormented by a swarm of flies. When asked why he did not use a flap and drive off his tormentors, he answered, 'The very circumstance which you think would re-

lieve me, would, in effect, promote tenfold suffering. For by driving away the flies now saturated with my blood, I should afford an opportunity to those that were empty and hungry to supply their place. And who doubts that the biting of a hungry insect is not ten thousand times more painful than that of one completely gorged,—unless the person attacked, be stone, and not flesh.' " (52)

APPLICATION.

My beloved, governors who are already enriched by plunder, are less likely to continue their oppression than they who are poor and needy.

TALE LII.

OF FIDELITY.

Valerius (53) records, that Fabius redeemed certain captives by the promise of a sum of money; which when the senate refused to confirm, he sold all the property he possessed, and with the produce paid down the stipulated sum, caring less to be thought poor in lands than poor in honesty.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, Fabius is Christ, who at the expence of life, ransomed mankind from eternal death.

TALE LIII.

OF GOOD RULERS, WHO ARE NOT TO BE CHANGED.

Valerius Maximus (54) states, that when all the Syracusans desired the death of Dionysius, king of Sicily, a single woman every morning entreated the gods to continue his life, and his sovereignty. Dionysius, surprised at this solitary exception, inquired the reason. She answered, " When I was a girl, and governed by a tyrant, I wished for his removal, and presently we obtained a worse instead. Having got rid of him, a worse still succeeded; and therefore, under the justifiable apprehension that your place may be filled up by a very devil, I pray earnestly for your

longer continuance *." Dionysius, hearing this, gave her no farther trouble.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, be not desirous of change. God is merciful and gracious—be content with His government.

TALE LIV.

OF A CELESTIAL KINGDOM.

The emperor Frederic constructed a curious marble gate at the entrance of Capua. It stood above a fountain of running water; and

* The sentiment is similar to that of Shakspeare.

"And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of."

Hamlet, Act III. Sc. 1.

upon it, the statues of the emperor and two of his judges were sculptured. In a half circle over the head of the right-hand judge was inscribed as follows, "He who regards his own safety and innocence, let him enter here." Similarly over the head of the left-hand judge appeared this scroll, "Banishment or imprisonment is the doom of the envious." In a semi-circle over the emperor's head, was written, "Those whom I made miserable, I recompensed." In like manner, above the gate, was inscribed, "In Cæsar's reign, I became the guardian of the kingdom." (55)

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the emperor is God; the marble gate is the Church, which is placed above a running fountain—that is, above the world, which fleets like a water-course. The judges indicate Mary, the mother of Jesus, and John the Evangelist.

TALE LV.

OF THE REVOCATION OF A BANISHED SINNER.

A CERTAIN great King had a handsome son, who proved himself, on all occasions, wise, bold, and courteous. The same King had four daughters also, whose names were Justice, Truth, Mercy, and Peace. Now the King, being very desirous of procuring for his son, a suitable partner, despatched a messenger in search of a beautiful virgin, to whom he should be united. At last, the daughter of the King of Jerusalem was selected, and married to the young Prince, who was much struck with the beauty of his bride. At this time, there was in the court, a servant whom the King principally trusted, and to whom he had confided the care of one of his provinces. This man,

in return for the benefits accumulated upon him, seduced the lady, and wasted the country over which he was placed. When the husband, therefore, knew of his wife's infidelity, he was overwhelmed with sorrow, and repudiated her with the loss of every honour. Thus circumstanced, she fell into extreme poverty; and, reduced to despair by the wretchedness of her condition, walked from place to place, begging her bread, and wishing for the death that came not to her relief. But at length, the husband, compassionating her distress, sent messengers to recall her to his court. "Come, lady," they said, "come in perfect safety. Thy lord wishes thy return; fear nothing." Yet she refused, and exclaimed, "Tell my lord, that I would willingly come to him, but I am unable to do so. If he ask why, say, in compliance with an imperious law. If a man marry, and his wife prove an adultress, he shall give her a writing of divorcement; but from that hour, she can be no longer his wife. To me such a writing has been given—for, alas! I am an adultress: therefore, it is impossible for me to return to

my lord."—" But," replied the messengers, " our lord is greater than the law which he made himself: and since he is disposed to shew mercy towards you, we repeat, that you may properly comply with his wishes, secure from further punishment or reproach."—" How shall I know that?" said the lady; " if my beloved would assure me of it; if he would deign to come and kiss me with the kiss of his lip, then should I feel certain of favor."

When the messengers communicated to the Prince what had passed between them and his afflicted wife, he called together the noblemen of his kingdom, and deliberated upon the measures it became him to adopt. After mature reflection, they determined that some man of experience and judgment, should be sent to persuade her to return. But they who answered this description, refused to undertake the office; and the husband, in his extremity, despatched once more the messengers, whom he commissioned to speak thus: " What can I do for you? There is not a man in my dominions who will execute my wishes!" These words increased the anguish

of the unfortunate lady; and she wept bitterly. Her condition was related to the Prince, and he earnestly besought his father to give him permission to bring back his wife, and to assuage her sorrows. The King acquiesced—"Go," said he, "go now in thy might, and re-instate her in the seat from which she has fallen." The messengers were then ordered to return and apprize her of the purposed visit. But the Prince's elder sister, that is to say, JUSTICE, understanding what was meditated, hastened to her father, and said, "My lord, art thou just? and is thy judgment righteous? Is it fit that the harlot should again become my brother's wife? You properly sanctioned the writing of divorcement; therefore, to the law let her appeal. And if, in violation of justice, you act thus, be assured, that I will no longer be accounted your daughter." The second sister, who was called TRUTH, then said, "My father, she has spoken truly. You have adjudged this woman an adultress: if you permit her to return, you destroy the very essence of truth, and therefore, I too, will no more fulfil the offices

of a daughter." But the third sister, called MERCY, hearing what had been said by the other two, exclaimed, "Oh, my lord, I also am thy daughter: forgive the offence of this repentant woman. If thou wilt not, thou abandonest Mercy, and she will never again acknowledge thee her father." The fourth sister, whose name was PEACE, terrified at the discord between her parent and sisters, fled to a remote corner of the earth.

Justice and Truth, however, relinquished not their purpose; and, putting into their father's hands a naked sword, said, "My lord, we present to you the sword of Justice. Take it, and strike the harlot who has wronged our brother." But Mercy, rushing forward, snatched the weapon from their grasp. "Enough, enough," cried she, "long have you reigned, and your inclinations have been your only law. Now forbear; it is fit that my wishes should sometimes be listened to. Remember, that I too, am the daughter of the King." To this Justice made answer, "Thou hast said well: we *have* reigned long: and long will we preserve our

authority. But why should there be this discord? Call our brother, who is wiser than us all; and let him judge between us." The proposal was assented to. They shewed him the grounds of their altercation, and explained how Justice and Truth pertinaciously demanded the infliction of the law, while Mercy and Peace sought a free forgiveness. "My beloved sisters," said the Prince, "I am little satisfied with the flight of my sister Peace, whom your unbeseeming strife has banished. This ought not to be, and shall not. And as for my adulterous wife, I am prepared to undergo her punishment myself." —"If this be your determination," observed Justice, "we cannot oppose you, my brother." Then turning towards Mercy, he said, "Use your endeavour to restore my wife. But should I receive her, and she again falls, do you design to renew your intercession?"—"Not," said the other, "unless she be truly penitent." The Prince then conducted back his sister Peace, and caused each of the others to embrace her, in turn. Concord being thus re-

established, he hastened to his erring wife. She was received with every honour, and ended her days in peace.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the King is our heavenly Father; the son is Christ; and the wife is the soul, made impure by connexion with the devil.

TALE LVI.

OF REMEMBERING DEATH.

A CERTAIN Prince derived great pleasure from the chase. It happened, on one occasion, that a merchant accidentally pursued the same path; and observing the beauty, af-

fability, and splendour of the Prince, he said in his heart; " Oh, ye heavenly powers! that man has received too many favors. He is handsome, bold, and graceful; and even his very retinue are equipped with splendour and comfort." Under the impression of such feelings, he addressed himself to one of the attendants, " My friend," said he, " is your master very powerful?"—" He is," replied the other, " the despotic lord of an extensive territory; his treasury is filled with silver and gold; and his slaves are exceedingly numerous."—" God has been bountiful to him," said the merchant; " he is more beautiful than any one I ever beheld; and his power vouches for his wisdom." Now the person with whom he conversed, related all that the merchant had said, to his master; and as the Prince turned homeward about the hour of vespers, he besought the merchant to tarry there all night. The entreaty of a potentate is a command; and the merchant, therefore, though with some reluctance, entered the palace. The prodigious display of wealth; the number of beautiful halls, ornamented in

every part with gold, surprized and delighted him. But supper-time approached, and the merchant, by express command of the Prince, was seated at his own table. This honor so enraptured the poor tradesman, that he secretly exclaimed, " Oh, Heaven ! the Prince possesses every thing that his heart wishes ; he has a beautiful wife, fair daughters, and brave sons. His family establishment is too extensive." As he thus thought, the meat was placed before him ; but what was his consternation to observe that it was deposited in the skull of a human being, and served from thence to the Prince and his guests on silver dishes. Horror-struck at what he saw, the merchant felt as if his own head must presently make part of the same diabolical service, and frequently did he internally ejaculate, " I am a dead man ! I am a dead man !"

In the meantime, the lady of the mansion comforted him as much as she could. The night passed on, and he was shewn into a bed-chamber hung round with cauldrons ; and in one corner of the room several lights were burning. As soon as he had entered,

the door was fastened without; and the unlucky merchant was left a solitary prey to his own increasing terror. Casting his eyes around him in despair, he distinguished two dead men hanging by the arms from the ceiling. This shocking circumstance so agonized him, that the cold sweat dropped from his brow, and of rest he was morally incapable. In the morning, he got up, but with augmented apprehensions. " Alas!" cried he, " they will assuredly hang me by the side of these murdered wretches. What will become of me?" When the Prince had risen, he commanded the merchant to be brought into his presence. " Friend," said he, " what portion of my family establishment best pleases you?" The man answered, " I am well pleased with every thing, my lord, except that my food was served to me out of a human head,—a sight so sickening that I could touch nothing. And when I would have slept, my repose was destroyed by the terrific objects which were exhibited to me. And, therefore, for the love of God, suffer me to depart." " Friend," replied the Prince, " the head out of which

you were served, and which stood exactly opposite to my wife—my beautiful, but wicked wife!—is the head of a certain duke. I will tell you why it was there. He whom I have punished in so exemplary a manner, I perceived in the act of dishonoring my bed. Instantly prompted by an uncontrollable desire of vengeance, I separated his head from his body. To remind the woman of her shame, each day, I command this memento to be placed before her, in the hope that her repentance and punishment may equal her crime. But the misfortunes of my family end not here; a son of the deceased duke slew two of my kindred, whose bodies you observed hanging in the chamber which had been appropriated to you. Every day, I punctually visit their corpses, to keep alive the fury which ought to animate me to revenge their deaths. And recalling the adultery of my wife, and the miserable slaughter of my kindred, I feel that there is no joy reserved for me in this world. Now then go in peace; and forget not the useful lesson which I have wished to impart. Remember that

external appearances are deceitful; and that human life, in its most gorgeous condition, is still accompanied by the revolting emblems of mortality. The merchant gladly availed himself of the permission to depart; and returned with greater satisfaction to the toils of traffic. (56)

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the Prince is intended to represent any good Christian, whose wife is the soul that sins, and being punished, remembers its iniquity and amends. The adulterer is the devil; to cut off his head, is to destroy our vices. The slain kinsmen of the Prince, are love to God and to our neighbour, which the sin of our first parent annihilated. The merchant is any good prelate or confessor, to whom the truth should always be exposed.

TALE LVII.

OF PERFECT LIFE.

When Titus was Emperor of Rome, he made a decree that the natal day of his first-born son should be held sacred; and that, whosoever violated it by any kind of labor, should be put to death. This edict being promulgated, he called Virgil (57) to him, and said, "Good friend, I have established a certain law; but as offences may frequently be committed without being discovered by the ministers of justice, we desire you to frame some curious piece of art, which may reveal to us every transgressor of the law." Virgil acquiesced, and immediately commenced his operations. He constructed a magic statue, and caused it to be erected in the midst of the city. By virtue of the secret powers with

which it was invested, it communicated to the Emperor whatever was done amiss. And thus, by the accusation of the statue, an infinite number of persons were convicted and punished. Now there was a certain carpenter, called Focus, who pursued his occupation every day alike. Once, as he lay in bed, his thoughts turned upon the accusations of the statue, and the multitudes which it had caused to perish. In the morning, he clothed himself, and proceeded to the statue, which he addressed in the following manner: "O statue! statue! because of thy informations, many of our citizens have been apprehended and slain. I vow to my God, that if thou accusest me, I will break thy head." Having so said, he returned home. About the first hour, the Emperor, as he was wont, despatched sundry messengers to the statue, to enquire if the edict had been strictly complied with. After they had arrived, and delivered the Emperor's pleasure, the statue exclaimed—"Friends, look up; what see ye written upon my forehead?" They looked, and beheld three sentences which ran thus:

" Times are altered. Men grow worse. He who speaks truth has his head broken."—" Go," said the statue, " declare to his majesty what you have seen and read." The messengers obeyed, and detailed the circumstances as they had happened.

The emperor, therefore, commanded his guard to arm, and march to the place on which the statue was erected; and he further ordered, that if any one presumed to molest it, they should bind him hand and foot, and drag him into his presence. The soldiers approached the statue and said, " Our Emperor wills you to declare the name of the scoundrel who threatens you." The statue made answer, " It is Focus the carpenter. Every day he violates the law, and moreover, menaces me with a broken head, if I expose him." Immediately Focus was apprehended, and conducted to the Emperor, who said, " Friend, what do I hear of thee? Why hast thou broken my law?"—" My lord," answered Focus, " I cannot keep it; for I am obliged to obtain every day eight pennies, which, without incessant labor, I have not the means of acquiring."—" And

why eight pennies?" said the Emperor. "Every day through the year," returned the carpenter, "I am bound to repay two pennies which I borrowed in my youth; two I lend; two I lose; and two I spend."—"For what reason do you this?" asked the Emperor. "My lord," he replied, "listen to me. I am bound, each day, to repay two pennies to my father; for, when I was a boy, my father expended upon me daily, the like sum. Now he is poor, and needs my assistance, and therefore, I return what I borrowed formerly. Two other pennies I lend to my son, who is pursuing his studies; in order, that if by any chance, I should fall into poverty, he may restore the loan, just as I have done to his grandfather. Again, I lose two pennies every day on my wife; for she is contradictious, wilful, and passionate, Now, because of this disposition, I account whatsoever is given to her, entirely lost. Lastly, two other pennies I expend upon myself in meat and drink. I cannot do with less; nor can I obtain them without unremitting labor. You now know the truth; and, I pray you, judge dispassion-

ately and truly."—" Friend," said the Emperor, " thou hast answered well. Go, and labor earnestly in thy calling." Soon after this, the Emperor died, and Focus the carpenter, on account of his singular wisdom, was elected in his stead, by the unanimous choice of the whole nation. He governed as wisely as he had lived; and at his death, his picture, bearing on the head eight pennies, was reposited among the effigies of the deceased Emperors.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the Emperor is God, who appointed Sunday as a day of rest. By Virgil is typified the Holy Spirit, which ordains a preacher to declare men's virtues and vices. Focus is any good Christian who labors diligently in his vocation, and performs faithfully every relative duty.

TALE LVIII.

OF CONFESSION.

A CERTAIN king, named Asmodeus, established an ordinance, by which every malefactor taken and brought before the judge, should distinctly declare three truths, against which no exception could be taken; or else be capitally condemned. If, however, he did this, his life and property should be safe. It chanced that a certain soldier transgressed the law and fled. He hid himself in a forest, and there committed many atrocities, despoiling and slaying whomsoever he could lay his hands upon. When the judge of the district ascertained his haunt, he ordered the forest to be surrounded, and the soldier to be seized, and brought bound to the seat of judg-

ment. "You know the law," said the judge. "I do," returned the other: "if I declare three unquestionable truths, I shall be free; but if not, I must die." "True," replied the judge: "take then advantage of the law's clemency, or undergo the punishment it awards, without delay."—"Cause silence to be kept," said the soldier undauntedly. His wish being complied with, he proceeded in the following manner. "The first truth is this. I protest before ye all, that from my youth up, I have been a bad man." The judge, hearing this, said to the by-standers, "He says true?" They answered, "Else, he had not now been in this situation."—"Go on, then," said the judge: "what is the second truth?"—"I like not," exclaimed he, "the dangerous situation in which I stand."—"Certainly," said the judge, "we may credit thee. Now then for the third truth, and thou hast saved thy life."—"Why," he replied, "if I once get out of this confounded place, I will never willingly re-enter it."—"Amen," said the judge, "thy wit hath preserved thee; go in peace." And thus he was saved.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the Emperor is Christ. The soldier is any sinner; the judge is a wise confessor. If the sinner confess the truth in such a manner as not even demons can object, he shall be saved—that is, if he confess, and repent.

TALE LIX.

OF TOO MUCH PRIDE; AND HOW THE PROUD ARE FREQUENTLY COMPELLED TO ENDURE SOME NOTABLE HUMILIATION.

When Jovinian was emperor, he possessed very great power; and as he lay in bed reflecting upon the extent of his dominions, his heart was elated to an extraordinary degree.

"Is there," he impiously asked, "Is there any other god than me?" Amid such thoughts he fell asleep.

In the morning, he reviewed his troops, and said, "My friends, after breakfast we will hunt." Preparations being made accordingly, he set out with a large retinue. During the chase, the emperor felt such extreme oppression from the heat, that he believed his very existence depended upon a cold bath. As he anxiously looked around, he discovered a sheet of water at no great distance. "Remain here," said he to his guard, "until I have refreshed myself in yonder stream." Then spurring his steed, he rode hastily to the edge of the water. Alighting, he divested himself of his apparel, and experienced the greatest pleasure from its invigorating freshness and coolness. But whilst he was thus employed, a person similar to him in every respect—in countenance and gesture—arrayed himself unperceived in the emperor's dress, and then mounting his horse, rode off to the attendants. The resemblance to the sovereign was such, that no doubt was enter-

tained of the reality; and straitway command was issued for their return to the palace.

Jovinian, however, having quitted the water, sought in every possible direction for his horse and clothes, and to his utter astonishment, could find neither. Vexed beyond measure at the circumstance (for he was completely naked, and saw no one near to assist him) he began to reflect upon what course he should pursue. " Miserable man that I am," said he, " to what a strait am I reduced! There is, I remember, a knight residing close by; I will go to him, and command his attendance and service. I will then ride on to the palace and strictly investigate the cause of this extraordinary conduct. Some shall smart for it." Jovinian proceeded, naked and ashamed, to the castle of the aforesaid knight, and beat loudly at the gate. The porter, without unclosing the wicket, enquired the cause of the knocking. " Open the gate," said the enraged emperor, " and you will see whom I am." The gate was opened; and the porter, struck with the strange appearance he exhibited, replied, " In the name of all that is

marvellous, what are you?" "I am," said he, "Jovinian, your emperor; go to your lord, and command him from me to supply the wants of his sovereign. I have lost both horse and clothes." "Infamous ribald!" shouted the porter, "just before thy approach, the emperor Jovinian, accompanied by the officers of his household, entered the palace. My lord both went and returned with him; and but even now sat with him at meat. But because thou hast called thyself the emperor, however madly, my lord shall know of thy presumption." The porter entered, and related what had passed. Jovinian was introduced, but the knight retained not the slightest recollection of his master, although the emperor remembered him. "Who are you?" said the former, "and what is your name?" "I am the emperor Jovinian," rejoined he; "canst thou have forgotten me? At such a time I promoted thee to a military command." "Why, thou most audacious scoundrel," said the knight, "darest thou call thyself the emperor? I rode with him myself to the palace, from whence I am this moment returned. But

thy impudence shall not go without its reward. Flog him," said he, turning to his servants, "Flog him soundly, and drive him away." This sentence was immediately executed, and the poor emperor, bursting into a convulsion of tears, exclaimed, "Oh my God, is it possible that one whom I have so much honoured and exalted should do this? Not content with pretending ignorance of my person, he orders these merciless villains to abuse me! However, it will not be long unavenged. There is a certain duke, one of my privy-counsellors, to whom I will make known my calamity. At least, he will enable me to return decently to the palace." To him, therefore, Jovinian proceeded, and the gate was opened at his knock. But the porter, beholding a naked man, exclaimed in the greatest amaze, "Friend, who are you, and why come you here in such a guise?" He replied, "I am your emperor; I have accidentally lost my clothes and my horse, and I have come for succour to your lord. Inform the duke, therefore, that I have business with him." The porter, more and more astonished, entered the hall, and com-

municated the strange intelligence which he had received. "Bring him in," said the duke. He was brought in, but neither did he recognize the person of the emperor. "What art thou?" was again asked, and answered as before. "Poor mad wretch," said the duke, "a short time since, I returned from the palace, where I left the very emperor thou assumest to be. But ignorant, whether thou art more fool or knave, we will administer such remedy as may suit both. Carry him to prison, and feed him with bread and water." The command was no sooner delivered, than obeyed; and the following day his naked body was submitted to the lash, and again cast into the dungeon.

Thus afflicted, he gave himself up to the wretchedness of his untoward condition. In the agony of his heart, he said, "What shall I do? Oh! what will be my destiny? I am loaded with the coarsest contumely, and exposed to the malicious observation of my people. It were better to hasten immediately to my palace, and there discover myself —my wife will know me; surely, my wife

will know me!" Escaping, therefore, from his confinement, he approached the palace and beat upon the gate. The same questions were repeated, and the same answers returned. "Who art thou?" said the porter. "It is strange," replied the aggrieved emperor, "It is strange that thou shouldest not know me; thou, who hast served me so long!" "Served *thee!*" returned the porter indignantly, "thou liest abominably. I have served none but the emperor." "Why," said the other, "thou knowest that I am he. Yet, though you disregard my words, go, I implore you, to the empress; communicate what I will tell thee, and by these signs, bid her send the imperial robes, of which some rogue has deprived me. The signs I tell thee of, are known to none but to ourselves." "In verity," said the porter, "thou art specially mad: at this very moment my lord sits at table with the empress herself. Nevertheless, out of regard for thy singular merits, I will intimate thy declaration within; and rest assured, thou wilt presently find thyself most royally beaten." The porter went accordingly, and related what he had

heard. But the empress became very sorrowful and said, "Oh, my lord, what am I to think? The most hidden passages of our lives are revealed by an obscene fellow at the gate, and repeated to me by the porter. On the strength of which he declares himself the emperor, and my espoused lord!" When the fictitious monarch was apprized of this, he commanded him to be brought in. He had no sooner entered, than a large dog, which couched upon the hearth, and had been much cherished by him, flew at his throat, and, but for timely prevention, would have killed him. A falcon also, seated upon her perch, no sooner beheld him, than she broke her jesses (57) and flew out of the hall. Then, the pretended emperor, addressing those who stood about him, said, "My friends, hear what I will ask of yon ribald. Who are you? and what do you want?" "These questions," said the suffering man, "are very strange. You know I am the emperor and master of this place." The other, turning to the nobles who sat or stood at the table, continued, "Tell me, on your allegiance, which of us two is your lord and

master?" "Your majesty asks us an easy thing," replied they, "and need not to remind us of our allegiance. That obscene wretch cannot be our sovereign. You alone are he, whom we have known from childhood; and we intreat that this fellow may be severely punished as a warning to others how they give scope to their mad presumption." Then turning to the empress, the usurper said, "Tell me, my lady, on the faith you have sworn, do you know this man who calls himself thy lord and emperor?" She answered, "my lord, how can you ask such a question? Have I not known thee more than thirty years, and borne thee many children? Yet, at one thing I do admire. How can this fellow have acquired so intimate a knowledge of what has passed between us?"

The pretended emperor made no reply, but addressing the real one, said, "Friend, how darest thou to call thyself emperor? We sentence thee, for this unexampled impudence, to be drawn, without loss of time, at the tail of a horse. And if thou utterest the same words again, thou shalt be doomed

to an ignominious death." He then commanded his guards to see the sentence put in force, but to preserve his life. The unfortunate emperor was now almost distracted; and urged by his despair, wished vehemently for death. "Why was I born?" he exclaimed; "my friends shun me; and my wife and children will not acknowledge me. But there is my confessor, still. To him will I go; perhaps he will recollect me, because he has often received my confessions." He went accordingly, and knocked at the window of his cell. "Who is there?" said the confessor. "The Emperor Jovinian," was the reply; "open the window, and I will speak to thee." The window was opened; but no sooner had he looked out than he closed it again in great haste. "Depart from me," said he, "accursed thing: thou art not the emperor, but the devil incarnate." This completed the miseries of the persecuted man; and he tore his hair, and plucked up his beard by the roots. "Woe is me," he cried, "for what strange doom am I reserved?" At this crisis, the impious words which, in the arrogance of his heart, he had

uttered, crossed his recollection. Immediately he beat again at the window of the confessor's cell, and exclaimed, "For the love of him who was suspended from the Cross, hear my confession." The recluse opened the window, and said, "I will do this with pleasure;" and then Jovinian acquainted him with every particular of his past life; and principally how he had lifted himself up against his Maker.

The confession made, and absolution given, the recluse looked out of his window, and directly knew him. "Blessed be the most high God," said he, "now do I know thee. I have here a few garments: clothe thyself, and go to the palace. I trust that they also will recognize thee." The emperor did as the confessor directed. The porter opened the gate, and made a low obeisance to him. "Dost thou know me?" said he; "Very well, my lord!" replied the menial; "but I marvel that I did not observe you go out." Entering the hall of his mansion, Jovinian was received by all with a profound reverence. The strange emperor was at that time in another apartment with the queen; and a certain knight going to him,

said, " My lord, there is one in the hall to whom every body bends; he so much resembles you, that we know not which is the emperor." Hearing this, the usurper said to the empress, " go and see if you know him." She went and returned greatly surprized at what she saw. " Oh, my lord," said she, " I declare to you that I know not whom to trust." " Then," returned he, " I will go and determine you." And taking her hand, he led her into the hall and placed her on the throne beside him. Addressing the assembly, he said, " By the oaths you have taken, declare which of us is your emperor." The empress answered, " It is incumbent on me to speak first; but heaven is my witness, that I am unable to determine which is he." And so said all. Then the feigned emperor spoke thus, " My friends, hearken! That man is your king, and your lord. He exalted himself to the disparagement of his Maker; and God, therefore, scourged and hid him from your knowledge. But his repentance removes the rod; he has now made ample satisfaction, and again let your obedience wait upon him. Commend

yourselves to the protection of heaven." So saying, he disappeared. The emperor gave thanks to God, and surrendering to him all his soul, lived happily and finished his days in peace. (58)

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the emperor represents any one whom the pride and vanity of life wholly engross. The knight to whom Jovinian first applied is Reason; which ever disclaims the pomps and fooleries of life. The duke is conscience; the savage dog, is the flesh, which alarms the falcon, that is, divine Grace. The wife is the human soul; the clothes in which the emperor was at last arrayed, are the virtues that befit the true sovereign, that is, the good Christian.

TALE LX.

OF AVARICE AND ITS SUBTLETY.

A CERTAIN king had an only daughter, remarkable for the beauty and dignity of her person. She was called Rosamond; and at the early age of ten years, she proved so swift a runner, that she invariably attained the goal before her competitor had proceeded half way. The king caused it to be proclaimed, that whosoever should surpass his daughter in speed, should marry her, and succeed to the throne: but in the event of a failure he should lose his head. This latter clause was wisely annexed; for the lady being so beautiful, and the reward so vast, an infinite crowd of rivals would have eagerly presented themselves. And even with the heavy penalty before them, numbers permitted themselves to be buoyed

up by the hope of success, to attempt, and to perish in the attempt. But it happened that a poor man, called Abibas, inhabited that country, who thus communed with himself. "I am very poor, and of a base extraction; if I may overcome this lady and marry her, not only shall I be promoted myself, but all who are of my blood." The incitement was too powerful for his resistance, and he determined to make the trial. But wiser than the rest, he took the three following precautions. First, he framed a curious garland of roses, of which he had ascertained that the lady was devotedly fond. Then, he procured a zone of the finest silk, from a conviction that most damsels were partial to this sort of clothing. And, lastly, he bought a silken bag, in which he deposited a golden ball bearing the following inscription; "Whosoever plays with me, shall never satiate of play." These three things he placed in his bosom, and knocked at the palace-gate. The porter enquired his business; and he stated his wish in the usual form.

It happened that the princess herself stood

at a window close by, and heard Abibas express his intention to run with her. Observing that he was poor, and his attire threadbare and rent, she despised him from her very heart. However she prepared to run; and every thing being in readiness, they commenced the race. Abibas would soon have been left at a considerable distance; but taking the garland of roses from its repository, he skilfully pitched it upon her head. Delighted with the odour and beauty of the flowers, the young lady paused to examine it; and Abibas took advantage of her forgetfulness and advanced rapidly toward the goal. This awoke her to a recollection of what was going forward, and crying aloud, "Never shall the daughter of a prince be united to this miserable clown," she threw the garland from her into a deep well, and rushed onward like a whirlwind. In a few moments she overtook the youth, and extending her hand, struck him upon the shoulder, exclaiming, "Stop, foolish thing; hopest thou to marry a princess?" Just as she was on the point of repassing him, he drew forth the silken girdle, and cast it at her feet. The

temptation again proved too strong for her resolution, and she stooped to gather it. Overjoyed at the beauty of its texture she must bind it round her waist; and whilst she did this, Abibas had recovered more ground than he had lost. As soon as the fair racer perceived the consequences of her folly, she burst into a flood of tears, and rending the zone asunder, hurried on. Having again overtaken her adversary, she seized him by the arm, striking him smartly at the same time: "Fool, thou shalt *not* marry me;" and immediately she ran faster than before. But Abibas, springing forward, threw at her feet the bag with the golden ball. It was impossible to forbear picking it up; and equally impossible not to open it and peep at its contents. She did so; but reading the inscription, "Who plays with me shall never satiate of playing," she played so much and so long, that Abibas came first to the goal and married her. (59)

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the king is Christ; the daughter is the soul, and Abibas is the devil, who provides various seductions to draw us from the goal of heaven.

TALE LXI.

OF REFLECTION.

The emperor Claudius had an only daughter who was incomparably beautiful. As he lay in bed, he reflected seriously upon the best mode of disposing of her. "If," thought he, "I should marry her to a rich fool, it will occasion her death. But if I bestow her upon a wise man, although he be poor, his own wit will procure him riches *."

* It was a maxim of Themistocles, that his daughter had better marry a man without an estate, than an estate without a man.

Now it happened, that there dwelt in the city a philosopher called Socrates, whom the king very greatly esteemed. This person was sent for, and thus addressed, " My good friend, I design to espouse you to my only daughter." Socrates, overjoyed at the proposal, expressed his gratitude as he best could. " But," continued the emperor, " take her with this condition ; that if she die first, you shall not survive her." The philosopher assented ; the nuptials were solemnized with great splendour, and for a length of time their happiness was uninterrupted.

But at last she sickened, and her death was hourly expected. This deeply afflicted Socrates, and he retired into a neighbouring forest and gave free course to his alarm. Whilst he was thus occupied, it chanced that king Alexander (60) hunted in the same forest ; and that a soldier of his guard discerned the philosopher, and rode up to him. " Who art thou ?" asked the soldier. " I am," replied he, " the servant of my master ; and he who is the servant of my master is the lord of thine." " How ?" cried the

other, "there is not a greater person in the universe than he whom I serve. But since you are pleased to say otherwise, I will presently lead you to him; and we will hear who thy lord is." Accordingly, he was brought before Alexander. "Friend," said the king, "concerning whom dost thou say, that his servant is my master?" The philosopher answered, "My master is reason; *his* servant is the will. Now dost thou not govern thy kingdom according to the dictates of thy will? Therefore, thy will is thy master. But the will is the servant of my master. So that what I said is true, and thou canst not disprove it." Alexander, wondering at the man's wit, candidly answered in the affirmative, and ever after ruled both himself and his kingdom by the laws of reason.

Socrates, however, entered farther into the forest, and wept bitterly over the expected decease of his wife. In the midst of his distress he was accosted by an old man who inhabited that part of the wood; "Master," said he, "why art thou afflicted?" "Alas!" answered the other, "I have espoused the

daughter of an emperor upon the condition, that if she die I should die with her: she is now on the point of death, and my life therefore will certainly be required." "What!" said the old man, "grievest thou for this? Take my counsel, and thou shalt be safe enough. Thy wife is of royal descent; let her besmear her breast with some of her father's blood. Then, do thou search in the depths of this forest, where thou wilt find three herbs: of one of them make a beverage and administer it to her; the other two beat into a plaster, and apply it to the afflicted part. If my instructions are exactly attended to, she will be restored to perfect health." Socrates did as he was directed; and his wife presently recovered. When the emperor knew how he had striven to find a remedy for his wife's disorder, he loaded him with riches and honours.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the emperor is our Lord Jesus Christ; the daughter is the soul, given to man

on condition that should it be destroyed by sin, he also should lose eternal life. The priest is the church, where health and safety may be found. The old man is a wise confessor, and Alexander is the world.

TALE LXII.

OF THE BEAUTY OF A FAITHFUL MIND.

When Salus was emperor, there lived a very beautiful woman whose name was Florentina. She was so remarkably handsome, that three kings sought her love, by one of whom she was abused. This occasioned a war between them, and great numbers of men fell on both sides. But the nobles, unwilling to see so much waste of blood, interfered, and addressing the emperor, bade him observe, that unless a stop was put to the virulent animosity which

divided them, the whole kingdom would be annihilated. The emperor, duly considering what had been said, directed letters, impressed with the royal signet, to be sent to the fair occasion of the war; by which, without delay, she was commanded to appear before him. A herald bore the mandate, but before he could deliver it, she died. The herald, therefore, returned, and the emperor, very much regretting that he had lost sight of so beautiful a woman, caused all the best artists in the kingdom to be summoned into his presence. When they were assembled, he spoke as follows: "My friends, the reason that I have sent for you is this. There was a very beautiful woman, named Florentina, for whose love a great number of men have lost their lives. She died before I had an opportunity of seeing her. Do ye go, therefore; paint her to the life, as she was in all her beauty. Thus shall I discover wherefore so many were sacrificed." The artists answered, "Your majesty wishes a thing which is very difficult to execute. Her beauty was so surpassing, that not all the artists in the world, save one, would be able to do her

justice; and he hides himself amongst the mountains. But he alone can perfectly fulfil your desires." On receiving this information, messengers were despatched in pursuit of him. He was soon found, and brought before the curious monarch, who commanded him to paint Florentina as she appeared when living; and if he did it, his reward should be royal. "Your request is extremely difficult," said the painter, "nevertheless, cause all the beautiful women in your kingdom to come before me for an hour at least, and I will do as you desire." The emperor complied, and made them stand in his presence. From these the artist selected four, and permitted the rest to return home. Then he commenced his labours. First, he laid on a coat of red colour; and whatever was exquisitely beautiful in the four women, *that* he copied in his painting. In this manner it received its completion; and when the emperor beheld it, he said, "Oh, Florentina, had you lived to eternity, you ought to have loved that painter who has represented you in so much beauty."

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the emperor is God; the beautiful Florentina is the soul. The three kings, the devil, the world, and the flesh. The nobles are the patriarchs and prophets, who were the mediators between God and man. The painters are the angels and men, amongst whom there was found no one who would rescue the soul from death. The artist who came from the mountains is Christ. The red colour is blood; the four women are existence, growth, feeling, and understanding.

TALE LXIII.

OF THE PLEASURES OF THIS WORLD.

The Emperor Vespasian had a daughter called Aglaës, whose loveliness was greater than that

of all other women. It happened that as she stood opposite to him on a certain occasion, he considered her very attentively, and then addressed her as follows: "My beloved daughter, thy beauty merits a loftier title than thou hast yet received. I will change thy name: henceforward, be thou called the LADY OF COMFORT, in sign that whosoever looks upon thee in sorrow, may depart in joy."

Now the emperor possessed, near his palace, a delicious garden, in which he frequently walked. Proclamation was made, that whosoever wished to marry his daughter, should come to the palace and remain in this garden the space of three or four days; when they quitted it, the ceremony should take place. Immense crowds were allured by the apparently easy terms of the notice; they entered the garden, but were never again seen. Not one of them returned. But a certain knight, who dwelt in some remote country, hearing of the conditions by which the daughter of a great king might be espoused, came to the gate of the palace and demanded entrance. On being introduced to the emperor, he spoke thus: "I hear it

commonly reported, my lord, that whoever enters your garden shall espouse your daughter. For this purpose I come." "Enter then," said the emperor; "on thy return thou shall marry her." "But," added the knight, "I solicit one boon of your majesty. Before I enter the garden, I would entreat an opportunity of conversing a short time with the lady." "I have no objection to that," said the emperor. She was called, and the knight accosted her in these words. "Fair damsel, thou hast been called the *Lady of Comfort*, because every one who enters thy presence sorrowful, returns contented and happy. I, therefore, approach thee sad and desolate—give me the means to leave thee in happiness: many have entered the garden, but never any re-appeared. If the same chance happen to me—alas! that I should have sought thee in marriage." "I will tell thee the truth," said the lady, "and convert thy unhappiness into pleasure. In that garden there is an enormous lion which devours every one who enters with the hope of marrying me. Arm thyself, therefore, cap-a-pee, and cover your

armour with gummy flax. As soon as you have entered the garden the lion will rush toward you; attack him manfully, and when you are weary, leave him. Then will he instantly seize you by the arm or leg; but in so doing, the flax will adhere to his teeth, and he will be unable to hurt you. As soon as you perceive this, unsheath your sword and separate his head from his body. Besides the ferocious animal I have described, there is another danger to be overcome. There is but one entrance, and so intricate are the labyrinths, that egress is nearly impossible without assistance. But here also I will befriend you. Take this ball of thread, and attach one of the ends to the gate as you enter, and retaining the line, pass into the garden. But, as you love your life, beware that you lose not the thread." (61)

The knight exactly observed all these instructions. Having armed himself, he entered the garden; and the lion, with open mouth, rushed forward to devour him. He defended himself resolutely; and when his strength failed he leapt a few paces back. Then, as the lady had said, the lion seized upon the knight's arm;

but entangling his teeth in the flax, he did him no injury; and the sword presently put an end to the combat. Unhappily, however, he let go the thread, and in great tribulation wandered about the garden for three days diligently seeking the lost clue. Towards night he discovered it, and with no small joy, hastened back to the gate. Then loosening the thread, he bent his way to the presence of the emperor; and in due time the LADY OF COMFORT became his wife. (62)

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the emperor is Christ; the lady of comfort, is the kingdom of heaven. The garden, is the world; the lion, the devil. The ball of thread, represents baptism, by which we enter into the world.

TALE LXIV.

OF THE INCARNATION OF OUR LORD.

A CERTAIN king was remarkable for three qualities. Firstly, he was braver than all men; secondly, he was wiser; and lastly, more beautiful. He lived a long time unmarried; and his counsellors would persuade him to take a wife. "My friends," said he, "it is clear to you that I am rich and powerful enough; and therefore want not wealth. Go, then, through town and country, and seek me out a beautiful and wise virgin; and if ye can find such a one, however poor she may be, I will marry her." The command was obeyed; they proceeded on their search, until at last they discovered a lady of royal extraction with the qualifications desired. But the king was not so easily satisfied, and determined to

put her wisdom to the test. He sent to the lady by a herald a piece of linen cloth, three inches square; and bade her contrive to make for him a shirt exactly fitted to his body. "Then," added he, "she shall be my wife." The messenger, thus commissioned, departed on his errand, and respectfully presented the cloth, with the request of the king. "How can I comply with it," exclaimed the lady, "when the cloth is but three inches square? It is impossible to make a shirt of that; but bring me a vessel in which I may work, and I promise to make the shirt long enough for the body." The messenger returned, with the reply of the virgin, and the king immediately sent a sumptuous vessel, by means of which she extended the cloth to the required size, and completed the shirt.[1] Whereupon the *wise* king married her.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the king is God; the virgin, the mother of Christ; who was also the chosen

vessel. By the messenger, is meant Gabriel. The cloth, is the Grace of God, which, by proper care and labour, is made sufficient for man's salvation.

TALE LXV.

OF THE CURE OF THE SOUL.

A KING once undertook a journey from one state to another. After much travel, he came to a certain cross, which was covered with inscriptions. On one side was written, "Oh, king, if you ride this way, you yourself will find good entertainment, but your horse will get nothing to eat." On another part appeared as follows: "If you ride this road, your horse will be admirably attended to, but you will get nothing for yourself." Again, on a

third place was inscribed: "If you walk this path, you will find entertainment both for yourself and horse; but before you depart, you will be miserably beaten." On a fourth part of the cross it was said: "If you walk this way, they will serve you diligently, but they will detain your horse, and oblige you to proceed the rest of your journey on foot." When the king had read the inscriptions, he began to consider which of the evils he should chuse. He determined at length upon the first; "For," said he learnedly, "I shall fare very well myself, though my horse starve; and the night will soon pass away." On this, he struck the spurs into his horse; and arrived at the castle of a knight who entreated him courteously, but gave his steed little or nothing. In the morning, he rode on to his own palace, and related all that he had seen.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the king is any good Christian, who journeys for the safety of his soul. The

horse which he rides is the body, composed of the four elements. The cross is conscience, which points out the way, and explains the consequences attending it.

TALE LXVI.

OF CONSTANCY.

THERE once lived a king who had a beautiful and beloved daughter. After his death, she succeeded to the throne, but being young and unprotected, a certain tyrannical duke came to her, and, by means of large promises, won her to dishonor. When his iniquitous purpose was accomplished, the girl wept bitterly; and soon after the tyrant expelled her from the inheritance. Thus reduced from the splendours of royalty, to the lowest state

of wretchedness, she solicited alms of the passengers. It happened that as she sat weeping by the way side, a certain knight passed by, and observing her great beauty, became enamoured of her. "Fair lady," said he, "what are you?" "I am," replied the weeping girl, "the only daughter of a king, after whose death, a tyrant seduced and abused me, and then deprived me of my inheritance." "Well," returned the knight, "are you willing to marry me?" "Oh! my lord," exclaimed she, "I desire it beyond any thing that could happen." "Then plight me your faith," said the knight; "promise to receive no one for your husband but me, and I will make war upon the tyrant, and reinstate you in your possessions. But if I fall in the conflict, I entreat you to retain my bloody arms under your care, in testimony of affection; that in case any one hereafter shall desire your love, you may remember the proof I have given of my attachment and devotion to your service." "I promise faithfully," returned she, "to comply with your wishes: but, oh! may your life be safe as my affec

tion!" The knight therefore armed himself, and proceeded to engage the tyrant, who had heard of his intention, and prepared for the attack. The soldier, however, overcame him, and cut off his head: but, receiving a mortal wound, he died on the third day. The lady bewailed his death, and hung up his bloody armour in her hall. She visited it frequently, and washed it with bitter tears. Many noblemen sought to espouse her, and made magnificent promises; but invariably before returning an answer, she entered the hall of the bloody armour, and surveying it stedfastly, exclaimed, amid abundance of tears, "Oh! thou, who devotedst thyself to death for one so unworthy, and restoredst me my kingdom!—far be it from me to abjure my plighted faith." Then returning to those who sought her love, she declared her resolution, never to unite herself with another, but to remain single to the end of her life. And so it was done *.

* See Tale XXV., which differs but little.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the king is our heavenly Father; and the daughter is the soul seduced by the devil. The wayside is the world. The soldier who rode past, is the Son of God; the bloody armour is his death and passion.

TALE LXVII.

OF EXCUSES WHICH ARE NOT TO BE ADMITTED IN EXTREME CASES.

The emperor Maximian was renowned for the wisdom of his government. In his reign, there lived two knights, the one wise and the other foolish, but who had a mutual regard for each other. "Let us make an agreement," said the wise knight, "which will be advantageous to both." The other assented, and by

the direction of his friend, proceeded to draw blood from his right arm. "I," said the latter, "will drink of thy blood, and thou of mine; so that neither in prosperity or in adversity, shall our covenant be broken, and whatsoever the one gains, shall be divided with the other." The foolish knight agreed; and they ratified the treaty by a draught of each other's blood. After this, they both dwelt in the same mansion. Now the lord of that country had two cities, one of which was built on the summit of a lofty mountain. It was so ordered, that no man could dwell there, unless he possessed great wealth; and having once entered, he must remain for life. The path to this city was narrow and stony, and about mid-way, three knights with a large army were stationed. The custom was, that whosoever passed should do battle, or lose his life, with every thing that he possessed. In that city, the emperor appointed a seneschal, who received without exception all who entered, and ministered to them according to their condition. But the other city was built in a valley under the mountain, the way to which

was perfectly level and pleasant. Three soldiers dwelt there, who cheerfully received whomsoever came, and served them according to their pleasure. In this city also a seneschal was placed, but he ordered all who approached to be thrown into prison, and on the coming of the judge to be condemned.

The wise knight said to his companion, "My friend, let us go through the world as other knights are wont to do, (63) and seek our fortune." His friend acquiesced; they set out upon their travels, and presently came to a place where two roads met. "See," said the wise knight, "here are two roads. The one leads to the noblest city in the world, and if we go thither, we shall obtain whatsoever our hearts desire. But the other path conducts to a city which is built in a valley; if we venture there, we shall be thrown into prison, and afterwards crucified. I advise, therefore, that we avoid this road, and pursue the other." "My friend," replied the foolish knight, "I heard long ago of these two cities; but the way to that upon the mountain is very narrow and dangerous, be-

cause of the soldiers who attack those that enter; nay, they frequently rob and murder them. But the other way is open and broad; and the soldiers who are stationed there receive passengers with hospitality, and supply them with all things necessary. This is sufficiently manifest; I see it, and had rather believe my own eyes than you." "It is true," returned his companion, "one way is difficult to walk along, but the other is infinitely worse at the end: ignominy and crucifixion will certainly be our doom. But fear you to walk the strait road, on account of a battle, or because of robbers? You, who are a soldier, and therefore in duty bound to fight valiantly! However, if you will go with me the way I desire, I promise to precede you in the attack; and be assured with your aid we shall overcome every obstacle." "I protest to you," said the other, "I will not go your way, but will take mine own." "Well," replied the wise knight, "since I have pledged you my word, and drank your blood in token of fidelity, I will proceed with you, though against my better judgment." So they both went the same path.

Their progress was extremely pleasant, till they reached the station of the three soldiers, who honorably and magnificently entertained them. And here the foolish knight said to the wise one, "Friend, did I not tell thee how comfortable this way would be found; in all which the other is deficient?" "If the end be well," replied he, "all is well; (64) but I do not hope it." With the three soldiers they tarried some time; insomuch that the seneschal of the city, hearing that two knights, contrary to royal prohibition, were approaching, sent out troops to apprehend them. The foolish knight he commanded to be bound hand and foot, and thrown into a well, but the other he imprisoned. Now, when the judge arrived, the malefactors were all brought before him, and amongst the rest, our two knights—the wiser of whom thus spoke: "My lord, I complain of my comrade, who is the occasion of my death. I declared to him the law of this city, and the danger to which we were exposed, but he would not listen to my words, nor abide by my counsels. 'I will trust my eyes,' said he, 'rather than you.' Now, be-

cause I had taken an oath never to forsake him in prosperity or in adversity, I accompanied him hither. But ought I therefore to die? Pronounce a just judgment." Then the foolish knight addressed the judge: "He is himself the cause of my death. For every one knows that he is reckoned wise, and I am naturally a fool. Ought he then so lightly to have surrendered his wisdom to my folly? And had he not done so, I should have returned to go the way which he went, even for the solemn oath which I had sworn. And therefore, since he is wise, and I am foolish, he is the occasion of my death." The judge, hearing this, spoke to both, but to the wise knight first. "Dost thou deserve to be called wise, who listened so heedlessly to his folly and followed him? and, fool that thou art! why didst thou not credit his word? By your own egregrious folly ye are both justly doomed. And both shall be suspended on the cross." Thus it was done.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the emperor is Christ; the two knights, body and soul; of which the last is the wise one. In baptism they were united. They drank blood; that is, the blood in the veins prevents their separation, and preserves life. The two ways are penitence and the world's glory. The way of penitence is narrow, but the other is broad and alluring. The city on the mountain is heaven; that in the valley is hell. The three soldiers, are the world, the flesh, and the devil, &c. &c.

TALE LXVIII.

OF MAINTAINING TRUTH TO THE LAST.

In the reign of Gordian, there was a certain noble soldier who had a fair but vicious wife.

It happened that her husband, having occasion to travel, the lady sent for her gallant, and rioted in every excess of wickedness. Now, one of her handmaids, it seems, was skilful in interpreting the song of birds; and in the court of the castle there were three cocks. (65) During the night, while the gallant was with his mistress, the first cock began to crow. The lady heard it, and said to her servant, " Dear friend, what says yonder cock ?" She replied, " That you are grossly injuring your husband." " Then," said the lady, " kill that cock without delay." They did so; but soon after, the second cock crew, and the lady repeated her question. " Madam," said the handmaid, " he says, ' My companion died for revealing the truth, and for the same cause, I am prepared to die.' " " Kill him," cried the lady,—which they did. After this, the third cock crew; " What says he ?" asked she again. " Hear, see, and say nothing, if you would live in peace." " Oh, oh !" said the lady, " *don't* kill him."

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the emperor is God, the soldier, Christ; and the wife, the soul. The gallant is the devil. The handmaid is conscience. The first cock is our Saviour, who was put to death; the second is the martyrs; and the third is a preacher who ought to be earnest in declaring the truth, but, being deterred by menaces, is afraid to utter it.

TALE LXIX.

OF CHASTITY.

The emperor Gallus employed a singularly skilful carpenter in the erection of a magnificent palace. At that period, a certain knight lived who had a very beautiful daughter; and

who, perceiving the extraordinary sagacity of the artificer, determined to give him the lady in marriage. Calling him, therefore, he said, "My good friend, ask of me what you will; so that it be possible, I will do it, provided you marry my daughter." The other assented, and the nuptial rites were celebrated accordingly. Then the mother of the lady said to the carpenter, "My son, since you have become one of our family, I will bestow upon you a curious shirt. It possesses this singular property, that as long as you and your wife are faithful to each other, it will neither be rent, nor worn, nor stained. But if— which heaven forbid!—either of you prove unfaithful, instantly it will lose its virtue." The carpenter, very happy in what he heard, took the shirt, and returned great thanks for the gift.

A short while afterward, the carpenter being sent for to superintend the building of the emperor's palace, took with him the valuable present which he had received. He continued absent until the structure was complete; and numbers, observing how much

he labored, admired the freshness and spotless purity of his shirt. Even the emperor condescended to notice it, and said to him, "My master, how is it that in despite of your laborious occupation, and the constant use of your shirt, it still preserves its color and beauty?" "You must know, my lord," said he, "that as long as my wife and I continue faithful to each other, my shirt retains its original whiteness and beauty; but if either of us forget our matrimonial vows, it will sully like any other cloth." A soldier, overhearing this, instantly formed the design of proving the fidelity of the lady. Wherefore, without giving any cause of suspicion to the carpenter, he secretly hastened to his house, and solicited his wife to dishonor. She received him with an appearance of pleasure, and seemed to be entirely influenced by the same feelings. "But," added she, "in this place we are exposed to observation; come with me, and I will conduct you into a private chamber." He followed her, and closing the door, she said, "Wait here awhile; I will return presently." Thus she did every day, all the time supplying him only with bread

and water. Without regard to his urgency, she compelled him to endure this humiliating treatment; and before long, two other soldiers came to her from the emperor's court, with the same evil views. In like manner, she decoyed them into the chamber, and fed them with bread and water.

The sudden disappearance, however, of the three soldiers, gave rise to much enquiry; and the carpenter, on the completion of his labors, received the stipulated sum, and returned to his own home. His virtuous wife met him with joy, and looking upon the spotless shirt, exclaimed, "Bessed be God! our truth is made apparent—there is not a single stain upon the shirt." To which he replied, "My beloved, during the progress of the building, three soldiers, one after another, came to ask questions about the shirt. I related the fact, and since that time nothing has been heard of them." The lady smiled, and said, "The soldiers respecting whom you feel anxious, thought me a fit subject for their improper solicitation, and came hither with the vilest intent. I decoyed them into a remote chamber, and have fed them with

bread and water." The carpenter, delighted with this proof of his wife's fidelity, spared their lives, and liberated them, on condition that they became honest men.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the emperor is God ; the palace is the human heart. The soldier who married his daughter to the carpenter is Christ ; the carpenter is any good Christian, and the mother is the Church. The shirt is faith ; the three soldiers are pride, lusts of the eyes, and lusts of the heart.

TALE LXX.

OF THE COMPUNCTIONS OF A FAITHFUL MIND.

A CERTAIN king had a beautiful and wise daughter, whom he was desirous of marrying.

But she had sworn never to unite herself with any but upon three conditions. First, he was to state accurately and succinctly how many feet there were in the length, breadth, and depth of the four elements. Secondly, what would change the north wind. And thirdly, by what means fire might be carried in the bosom without injury. When the king, therefore, understood his daughter's resolution, he proclaimed it through the kingdom, and promised to give her in marriage to whomsoever performed the conditions. Many endeavoured, but failed; until at length a certain soldier from foreign parts heard of the girl's oath. He hastened to the palace, conveying with him a single attendant, and an extremely fiery horse. On being admitted into the king's presence, he said, "I am desirous of espousing your majesty's daughter, and I am prepared to solve the questions which have been proposed." The king assented, and the soldier calling his servant, commanded him to lie upon the earth. And when he was thus laid, his master measured his length from one extremity to the other.

When he had done this, he said to the king, "My lord, your first question is resolved; I find in the four elements scarcely seven feet." "How?" replied the king, "What has this to do with the four elements?" "My lord," answered the soldier, "every man as well as every animal, is composed of the four elements. "Amen," said the king, "you have proved this very satisfactorily. Now then for the second condition; which is to change the wind." Immediately he caused his horse to be brought into the area of the court, and there administered a potion, by which the animal was made perfectly quiet. This done he turned his horse's head toward the East, and said, "Observe, my lord, the wind is changed from North to East." "How?" answered the king, "what is this to the wind?" "Sire," returned the soldier, "is it not obvious to your wisdom that the life of every animal consists in his breath, which is air? As long as he remained toward the North, he raged fiercely, and his snorting was excessive. But when I had given him the potion and turned him toward the East, he became

quiet and breathed less, and in a different direction; wherefore, the *wind is changed*." "This also," said the king, "you have well proved; go on to the third." "My lord," replied the soldier, "this, so please you, I will perform before all your court." Then, taking up a handful of burning coals, he deposited them in his bosom, without injury to his flesh. "Truly," exclaimed the king, "you have done very well in these matters: but tell me, how happens it that you are unhurt by the fire." "It was not," returned the soldier, "by any power of my own, but by virtue of a singular stone, which I always carry about with me. And whosoever possesses this stone is able to resist the hottest fire." The king, satisfied that the conditions had been accurately complied with, gave orders for his marriage with the lady. He loaded him with riches and honors, and they both ended their days in the greatest happiness.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the king is our Lord Jesus Christ. The daughter is the human soul. To measure the elements, is to subdue the lusts of the flesh. The fiery horse is any sinner, whom repentance changes. The fire in the bosom is luxury, pride, avarice, &c. and the stone is a true and lively faith in Christ.

TALE LXXI.

OF AN ETERNAL RECOMPENCE.

A KING made a great feast, and despatched messengers with invitations, in which the guests were promised not only a magnificent entertainment, but considerable wealth. When the messengers had gone through town and

country, executing every where the commands of their king, it happened that there dwelt in a certain city two men, of whom one was valiant and robustly made, but blind; while the other was lame and feeble, but his sight was excellent. Said the blind man to the lame, "My friend, our's is a hard case; for it is spread far and near that the king gives a great feast, at which every man will receive not only abundance of food but much wealth; and thou art lame, while I am blind: how then shall we get to the feast?" "Take my counsel," replied the lame man, "and we will obtain a share both of the dinner and wealth." "Verily," answered the other, "I will follow any counsel that may benefit me." "Well then," returned the blind man, "thou art stout of heart, and robust of body, and therefore, thou shalt carry me on thy back who am lame and weak. My eyes shall be as thine; and thus, for the loan of thy legs, I will lend thee my eyes; by means of which we shall reach the festival and secure the reward." "Be it as thou hast said," replied he of the legs; "get upon my back immediately."

He did so; the lame man pointed the way, and the other carried him. They arrived at the feast, and received the same recompence as the rest. (66)

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the king is our Lord Jesus Christ, who prepared the feast of eternal life. The blind man is the powerful of this world, who are blind to their future safety. The lame man is any devout person, who has nothing in common with the man of the world, but sees the kingdom which is to come *.

* The latter part of this *moralization* recommends "fideliter viris ecclesiasticis *decimas dare. Si* hæc feceritis nos viri religiosi tenemur vobis viam salutis ostendere quomodo poteritis ad vitam eternam pervenire." The monks never forgot this—"If you pay us, we will shew you the way; else, find it out yourself." Such was the burden of their song.

TALE LXXII.

OF THE DESTRUCTION OF UNGRATEFUL MEN.

A CERTAIN king had an only son, whom he ardently loved. When the boy arrived at man's estate, day after day he solicited his father to resign the kingdom, and deliver to himself the sovereign power. "My dear son," said the king, "if I were satisfied that you would treat me honourably and kindly during the remainder of my life, I should have no objection to relinquish the throne to you." The son answered, "My lord, I will bind myself by an oath before all the noblemen of the empire, to do in every respect, as a son ought to do. Be confident that I will shew greater honour to you than to myself." The old king

trusted to his assurances, and resigned the supreme command. But no sooner was he crowned, and seated on the throne of his ancestors, than his heart underwent a total change. For a few years he gave due honour to his indulgent parent, but after that entirely neglected him. This unexpected and unmerited treatment, naturally exasperated the old king, and he began to complain to the wise men of the empire, that his son had broken the contract. They, therefore, having always loved the father, reproved the son for his ingratitude. But the new king spurned them from him with fury; imprisoned his father in a castle, and permitted not the smallest access to him. Here he often endured the extremity of hunger, and every other species of wretchedness.

It happened that the king himself once passed the night in the same castle; and the father sent to him the following message—" Oh my son, pity thy old father who gave up every thing to thee. I suffer thirst and hunger; and deprived of all comfort—even of wine to cheer me in my infirmity—I draw out my life." " I know

not," said the king, "that there is wine in this castle." He was told that there were five casks reposited in that place, but that without his permission the seneschal refused to draw wine from them. "Suffer me, my dear son," said the unhappy father, "suffer me at least to recruit my wasted form with the first of these casks." The son refused, alleging that it was new, and therefore prejudicial to old men. "Then," said the old man, "give me the second cask." "I will not do that," answered the king, "because it is kept for my own drinking, and for the young noblemen who attend me." "Yet you will surely permit me to take the third," continued his father; "No," replied the other, "it is very strong, and you are so weak and infirm that it would kill you." "The fourth cask then?" said he, "give me that."

"It is sour, and would do you much injury."

"But," urged the father, "there is a fifth, allow me to retain it." "Oh," said the king, "it is nothing but dregs; the noblemen sent it to destroy thee in case thou wert permitted to drink of it." The poor father hearing excuses like these, went away very sorrowful;

but secretly wrote letters to the noblemen, declaring how he had been treated, and imploring them to relieve him from the misery he was compelled to endure. His ill usage excited their pity and indignation; they restored the father, and threw the son into prison, where he died *.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the king is Christ; and the son is any bad Christian.

TALE LXXIII.

OF AVARICE, WHICH MAKES MANY BLIND.

A CERTAIN king of Rome decreed, that every blind man should annually receive a hundred

* Our nursery-books contain a story not unlike the present. A father resigns his estates to an ungrateful son, and is driven into the garret, and left to neglect and poverty. The grandson pities, and by a pointed speech—hardly characteristic of a child—reproves, and touches his parent's heart.

shillings from the emperor. It happened that twenty-three associates came into the city and entered a tavern to drink. They remained there seven days, both eating and drinking; but when they would reckon with the tavern-keeper, they had not sufficient money to defray the expence of what they had consumed. "Friends," quoth mine host, "here be wanting a hundred shillings. I tell you, of a certainty, ye go not hence till ye have paid the uttermost farthing." This rather startled the revellers, who, turning to one another, exclaimed, "What shall we do? We cannot pay so large a sum." At length one of them observed, "Listen to me; I will give you the best advice. The king of this country has decreed, that whosoever is blind shall receive from his treasury one hundred shillings. Let us then cast lots, and upon whomsoever the lot falls, we will deprive him of sight, and send him to the king for the promised benevolence. Thus we shall depart in peace." They all agreed that the counsel was excellent; and casting lots, the chance fell upon the contriver of the expedient; whose eyes they im-

mediately put out. He was then led to the palace. Arriving at the gate, they knocked and were admitted by the porter, who enquired their business. The blind man answered, "I am one entitled, from my deficiency of sight, to the benefit of the royal donation." "Well," said the porter, "I will inform the seneschal." He went accordingly; but the wary seneschal first determined to examine his exterior before he delivered the money. He did so, and then asked what he wanted. "A hundred shillings," replied he, "which the law gives to every blind man." "My friend," said the seneschal, "if I am not greatly mistaken, I saw you yesterday in a tavern with both eyes perfect. You misinterpret the law. It relates to those who, by some natural infirmity, or by accident, become blind—and against which there was no defence. Such the law protects and relieves. But you, who voluntarily surrendered your eyes to liquidate a debt incurred by the most unwarrantable gluttony, can have no claim or pretence to the royal munificence. Seek, therefore, consolation and relief elsewhere." The blind man,

cursing his folly, retired in great confusion, from the palace.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the law in the story is the law of God. He who errs by natural infirmity, or through the temptations of the devil, and repents, is forgiven. But if any one, from pure malice, shall commit sin, and fall into despair he can scarcely, if at all, be pardoned. The tavern-keeper is the devil.

TALE LXXIV.

OF FORESIGHT AND CARE

A KING had an only son, whom he tenderly loved. He caused a golden apple to be made

at an immense expense; and shortly after its fabrication he sickened. Finding his end approach, he called to him his son, and spoke after the following manner. "My dear son, if it please God that I should not recover from the sickness under which I suffer, on my blessing I charge you, travel through town and country, and take with you the golden apple which I caused to be made; find out the greatest fool, and deliver to him that apple from me." The son faithfully promised to execute his parent's wish; and the king, turning himself toward the wall, resigned his spirit. A splendid funeral was prepared, and after the interment, the son set out upon his travels, with the apple in his possession.

He traversed many countries and kingdoms, and found abundance of fools, but none whom he thought quite worthy of the apple. At last he entered a certain province, and approached its principal city. Observing the king, very magnificently attended, riding through the streets, he asked various questions respecting the person he saw; and especially of the institutions of the country. He was answered, that according

to their custom the throne was annually vacated; and that the late possessor, deprived of every honour, was driven into banishment, where he died in obscurity and poverty. The traveller, hearing this account, exclaimed, "*This* is the man; I have found him whom I sought;" and immediately hastening to the palace, he bent his knee, and cried, "Hail, Oh king! my deceased father bequeathed to you this golden apple in his last will." The king received the gift, and said, "My friend, how can this be? Your royal parent knew nothing of me, nor have I ever performed any service to him. Why then hath he left me so valuable a present?" "The king, my lord," replied he, "bequeathed it not more to you than to another; but on his blessing, he charged me to bestow it upon the greatest fool that I could find. And I have now travelled through various kingdoms and countries, but no where have I discovered so exquisite a fool and madman. Therefore, according to my sire's command, I resign the apple to your most gracious majesty." "But," said the king, "on what account do you take me for a fool?" "I will tell

you, my lord," returned the other. "You are king for one year; and then, doomed to poverty and exile, you perish most miserably. I declare to you, I do not believe that there is in the whole world, such an instance of egregious folly. For would any but a fool choose so short a time of splendour for an end so calamitous?" "Why," replied the king, "you are doubtless right; and therefore, while I yet reign, I will prepare for my future existence. I will send the greater portion of my wealth into a remote land, upon which I may live in comfort, when I am driven into exile." He did so; and for a number of years enjoyed great prosperity, and ended his life in peace.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the king, who bequeathed a golden apple to fools, is God. That apple is the world. The king who reigned for a year, is any man who lives in this world (considered with respect to futurity), but as a single hour. Let us then make provision for the future.

TALE LXXV.

OF WORLDLY ANXIETY.

There formerly lived a king who had three fair daughters. He married them to three dukes; but, unhappily, all their husbands died in the space of one year. The king, being made acquainted with this circumstance, would have had his daughters marry again, and calling the first into his presence, he said:—"My dear daughter, your husband is dead; I will therefore unite you to another." But she would by no means consent, and assigned for it this reason. "If I marry again, I should love my second husband equally with the first; perhaps more, or it might be less. This ought not to be; for my first husband possessed my earliest affection—my vir-

gin troth. Therefore the second ought not to be loved so well. But I might love him more, and this would increase the evil: on the other hand, if I loved him less, there would exist only contention between us. So that I resolve never to be espoused again." The king, satisfied with what he heard, called another of his daughters, and proposed the same thing to her as to her elder sister. She replied, "My lord, I also decline this matter. For should I comply, it must be either for riches, or power, or beauty. Now of riches I have quite enough; my friends are sufficiently numerous to defend me; and as for beauty, I do not believe there was so beautiful a person in the world as my late husband. Therefore, I too resolve upon a single state." The king then applied to the third daughter, and she gave the following reasons for refusing his request. "If," said she, "I marry, my husband must desire me either for my beauty or my wealth. Now it cannot be for the former, because I am not beautiful; then it must be for the latter, and true love never existed which

was founded upon mercenary feelings. When wealth flies, love flies with it *. Therefore, I would on no account marry again. Moreover, the Sacred Writings say, that a husband and wife are one body but two souls ; therefore the body of my husband is my body, and the converse. Every day I visit the sepulchre of my deceased lord, and he is ever present to my mind. For all these causes, I determine to remain as I am." The king, pleased with the virtuous resolutions of his daughters, solicited them no more.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the king is God. The three daughters are the soul, which image the Holy Trinity. For God said, "Let us make man in *our image* ; therefore the Trinity in unity is typified by the soul, and the soul represented by three persons. The three dukes are the devil, the world, and the flesh ; when they die,

* When Poverty comes in at the door, Love flies out at the window.—English Proverb.

that is, when the soul repents of her sins, do not again be united to them.

TALE LXXVI.

OF CONCORD.

Two physicians once resided in a city, who were admirably skilled in medicine; insomuch, that all the sick who took their prescriptions were healed; and it thence became a question with the inhabitants, which of them was the best. After a while, a dispute arose between them upon this point. Said one, "My friend, why should discord or envy or anger separate us; let us make the trial, and whosoever is inferior in skill shall serve the other." "But how," replied his friend, "is this to be brought about?" The first

physician answered, " Hear me. I will pluck out your eyes, without doing you the smallest injury, and lay them before you on the table; and when you desire it, I will replace them as perfect and serviceable as they were before. If, in like manner, you can perform this, we will then be esteemed equal, and walk as brethren through the world. But, remember, he who fails in the attempt shall become the servant of the other." " I am well pleased," returned his fellow, " to do as you say." Whereupon, he who made the proposition took out his instruments and extracted the eyes, besmearing the sockets and the outer part of the lids with a certain rich ointment. " My dear friend," said he, " what do you perceive?" " Of a surety," cried the other, " I see nothing. I want the use of my eyes, but I feel no pain from their loss. I pray you, however, restore them to their places as you promised." " Willingly," said his friend. He again touched the inner and outer part of the lids with the ointment, and then, with much precision, inserted the balls into their sockets. " How do you see now?" asked he. " Excel-

lently," returned the other, "nor do I feel the least pain." "Well, then," continued the first, "it now remains for you to treat me in a similar manner *." "I am ready," said the latter. And accordingly taking the instruments, as the first had done, he smeared the upper and under parts of the eye with a peculiar ointment, drew out the eyes and placed them upon the table. The patient felt no pain; but, added, "I wish you would hasten to restore them." The operator cheerfully complied; but as he prepared his implements, a crow entered by an open window, and seeing the eyes upon the table, snatched one of them up, and flew away with it. The physician, vexed at what had happened, said to himself, "If I do not restore the eye to my companion I must become his slave." At that moment a goat, browsing at no great distance, attracted his observation. Instantly he ran to it, drew out one of its eyes, and put it into the place of the lost orb. "My dear friend," exclaimed the operator,

* A foolish physician. If the other succeeded, he acknowledged his superiority, or equality, at least; if not, he lost his eyes. At all events, he could gain nothing by the experiment.

"how do things appear to you?" "Neither in extracting or in replacing," he answered, "did I suffer the least pain; but—bless me!—one eye looks up to the trees!" "Ah!" replied the first, "this is the very perfection of medicine. Neither of us is superior; henceforward we will be friends, as we are equals; and banish far off that spirit of contention which has destroyed our peace." The goat-eyed man of physic acquiesced; they lived from this time in the greatest amity.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the two physicians are the new and the old law. Thus the Jews and Christians contend: the extracted eyes, denote those parts of the old law which Christians retain. The crow is the devil; and the goat's eye typifies those ceremonies of the Jews to which they attach so much importance, and by which they are not able to discern the truth *.

* This is to see the beam in a neighbour's eye, and forget that in their own. The Catholic ceremonies are open to the same censure, and are equally prejudicial in their consequences.

TALE LXXVII.

OF RICHES, WHICH ARE NOT TO BE COVETED.

A CERTAIN king had two daughters, one of whom was extremely beautiful, and very much beloved. The other, however, was of a dark, unprepossessing complexion, and hated, as much as her sister was esteemed. This difference in their appearance caused the king to give them characteristic names. He called the first Rosamunda*, that is, the fragrant rose; and the second, Gratiaplena, or the full of grace.

* Or *Rosa mundi,* rose of the world. There are two monkish Latin verses inscribed over the unfortunate paramour of Henry II. which may find a place here :—

"Hic jacet in tumba ROSA MUNDI, non ROSAMUNDA;
"Non redolet, sed olet, quæ redolere solet."—CAMDEN.

A herald was commanded to proclaim, that whosoever would marry either of the two daughters, should do so upon the following conditions. First, that they should be the worthiest of the candidates; secondly, that whoever chose the beautiful girl, should have nothing but her beauty; but he who selected the dark girl should succeed him to the throne. Multitudes flocked to the summons; but every one still clung to the fair lady, and not even the temptation of a kingdom could induce any one to espouse the other. Gratiaplena wept bitterly at her unhappy fate; "My daughter," said the king, "why are you so grievously afflicted?" "Oh, my father," returned she, "no one visits or speaks kindly to me; all pay their attentions to my sister, and despise me." "Why, my dear daughter," said the father, "do you not know, that whosoever marries you will possess the crown?" This was touching the right string; the lady dried her tears, and was marvellously comforted.

Not long after a king entered the royal palace, and seeing the great beauty of Rosa-

munda, desired her in marriage. The father-king consented, and she was espoused with great joy. But the other daughter remained many years unbetrothed. At last, a certain poor nobleman very wisely reflecting, that though the girl was abominably ugly, yet she was rich, determined to marry her. He therefore went to the king, and solicited his consent; who, glad enough at the proposal, cheerfully bestowed her upon him; and after his decease, bequeathed him the kingdom.

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the king is our Lord Jesus Christ; Rosamunda is the world, which every one loves. The other daughter, Gratiaplena, so abhorred by the world, is poverty. But the poor in spirit will receive the kingdom of heaven.

TALE LXXVIII.

OF THE CONSTANCY OF LOVE.

The beautiful daughter of a certain king was betrothed to a noble duke, by whom she had very handsome children. The duke died, and was greatly bewailed by the whole state. After his death her friends earnestly solicited the lady to marry a second time, alleging that her youth and beauty required it. But she answered, " I will never marry again. My departed lord was so good and kind; he loved me so truly, that when he died I thought I could not survive him. And if it were possible that I could forget what he has been, where shall I find another? Admitting that I should marry, perhaps my second husband would also precede me to the grave? Why then, my grief would be awakened a second time, and my

afflictions be as heavy as before! Moreover, if he were a bad man; it would, indeed, be torture to remember him who was good, while one so inferior had succeeded him. I am therefore determined to remain as I am." *

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the king is God; the daughter the soul, betrothed to our Lord Jesus Christ.

TALE LXXIX.

OF PRESUMPTION.

There was a certain king who had a singular partiality for little dogs that barked loudly; so much so, indeed, that they usually rested

* See Tale LXXV. which is similar both in structure and reasoning.

in his lap. Being long accustomed to eat and sleep in this situation, they would scarcely do either elsewhere: seeming to take great pleasure in looking at him, and putting their paws upon his neck. Now it happened that an ass, who noticed this familiarity, thought to himself, "If I should sing and dance before the king, and put my feet round his neck, he would feed me also upon the greatest dainties, and suffer me to rest in his lap." Accordingly quitting his stable, he entered the hall, and running up to the king, raised his clumsy feet with difficulty around the royal neck. The servants, not understanding the ass's courteous intention, imagined that he was mad; and pulling him away, belaboured him soundly. He was then led back to the stable. (67)

APPLICATION.

My beloved, the king is Christ; the barking dogs are zealous preachers. The ass is any one who, without the necessary qualifications, presumes to take upon himself the interpretation of the word of God.

TALE LXXX.

OF THE CUNNING OF THE DEVIL, AND OF THE SECRET JUDGMENTS OF GOD.

There formerly lived a hermit, who in a remote cave passed night and day in the service of God. At no great distance from his cell, a shepherd tended his flock. It happened that this person one day fell into a deep sleep, and in the mean time a robber, perceiving his carelessness, carried off his sheep. When the keeper awoke and discovered the theft, he began to swear in good set terms that he had lost his sheep; and where they were conveyed was totally beyond his knowledge. Now the lord of the flock, nothing satisfied with his keeper's eloquence, commanded him to be put to death. This gave great umbrage to

the hermit before mentioned; "Oh heaven," said he to himself, "seest thou this deed? the innocent suffers for the guilty: why permittest thou such things? If thus injustice triumph, why do I remain here? I will again enter the world, and do as other men do."

With these feelings he quitted his hermitage, and returned into the world; but God willed not that he should be lost: an angel in the form of a man was commissioned to join him. Accordingly, crossing the hermit's path, he thus accosted him—"My friend, where are you going?" "I go," said the other, "to the city before us." "I will accompany you," replied the angel; "I am a messenger from heaven, and come to be the associate of your way." They walked on together towards the city. When they had entered, they entreated for the love of God* harbourage during the night, at the house of a certain soldier, who received them with cheerfulness, and entertained them with much

* The common mode of supplication, and will be frequently noticed in these volumes.

magnificence. The soldier had an only son lying in the cradle, whom he exceedingly loved. After supper, their bed-chamber was sumptuously decorated; and the angel retired with the hermit to rest. But about the middle of the night the former got up and strangled the sleeping infant. The hermit, horror-struck at what he witnessed, said within himself, "Never can this be an angel of God: the good soldier gave us every thing that was necessary; he had but this poor innocent, and he is strangled."—Yet he was afraid to reprove him.

In the morning both arose and went forward to another city, in which they were honourably entertained at the house of one of the inhabitants. This person possessed a superb golden cup which he highly valued; and which, during the night, the angel purloined. But still the hermit held his peace, for his apprehension was extreme. On the morrow they continued their journey; and as they walked they came to a certain river, over which a bridge was thrown; they ascended the bridge, and about mid-way a poor

pilgrim met them. "My friend," said the angel to him, "shew us the way to yonder city." The pilgrim turned, and pointed with his finger to the road they were to take; but as he turned, the angel seized him by the shoulders, and precipitated him into the stream below. At this the terrors of the hermit were again aroused—"It is the devil," exclaimed he internally—"it is the devil, and no good angel! What evil had the poor man done that he should be drowned?" He would now have gladly departed alone; but was afraid to give utterance to the thoughts of his heart. About the hour of vespers they reached a city, in which they again sought shelter for the night; but the master of the house to whom they applied, sharply refused it. "For the love of heaven," said the angel, "afford us a shelter, lest we fall a prey to the wolves and other wild beasts." The man pointed to a stye—"That," said he, "is inhabited by pigs; if it please you to lie there you may—but to no other place will I admit you." "If we can do no better," returned the angel, "we must accept your ungracious

offer." They did so; and in the morning the angel calling their host, said, "My friend, I give you this cup;" and he presented to him the stolen goblet. The hermit more and more astonished at what he saw, said to himself, "Now I am certain this is the devil. The good man who received us with all kindness, he despoiled, and gives the plunder to this fellow who refused us a lodging." Turning to the angel, he exclaimed, "I will travel with you no longer. I commend you to God." "Dear friend," answered the angel, "First hear me, and then go thy way.

THE EXPLANATION.

When thou wert in thy hermitage, the owner of the flock unjustly put to death his servant. True it is he died innocently, and therefore was in a fit state to enter another world. God permitted him to be slain, foreseeing, that if he lived he would commit a sin, and die before repentance followed. But the guilty man who stole the sheep will suffer eternally, while the owner of the flock

will repair, by alms and good works, that which he ignorantly committed. As for the son of the hospitable soldier, whom I strangled in the cradle, know, that before the boy was born, he performed numerous works of charity and mercy; but afterwards grew parsimonious and covetous, in order to enrich the child, of which he was inordinately fond. This was the cause of its death; and now its distressed parent is again become a devout Christian. Then, for the cup which I purloined from him who received us so kindly, know, that before the cup was made, there was not a more abstemious person in the world; but afterwards he took such pleasure in it, and drank from it so often, that he was intoxicated twice or thrice during the day. I took away the cup, and he has returned to his former sobriety. Again, I cast the pilgrim into the river; and know, that he whom I drowned was a good Christian, but had he proceeded much further, he would have fallen into a mortal sin. Now he is saved, and reigns in celestial glory. Then, that I bestowed the cup upon the inhospitable citizen,

know, nothing is done without reason. He suffered us to occupy the swine-house, and I gave him a valuable consideration. But *he* will hereafter reign in hell. Put a guard, therefore, on thy lips, and detract not from the Almighty. For He knoweth all things." The hermit, hearing this, fell at the feet of the angel and entreated pardon. He returned to his hermitage, and became a good and pious Christian. (68)

NOTES.

NOTE 1. Page 4.

"THE latter part of this story is evidently oriental. The feudal manners, in a book which professes to record the achievements of the Roman people, are remarkable in the introductory circumstances. But of this mixture we shall see many striking instances."—WARTON.

NOTE 2. Page 6.

"*Precious skin.*"

Attempts, like the present, to strain every thing into an allegory, are very frequent in these "mystical and moral applications." It is for this reason, among others, that I thought it right to abridge them; for while the reader's patience was exhausted,

his feelings would revolt, as well at the absurdity, as at the apparent impiety of the allusion.

Note 3. Page 19.

The deliverance of the youth by the lady, resembles the 236th Night of the Arabian tales.—The *Gest* is mentioned by Warton as the *second* tale in his analysis; and two or three other variations occur. What edition he followed I know not. I have examined five *.—The sentiment conveyed by this tale, (p. 18), that she who has deceived her father will deceive her husband, is thus expressed by Shakspeare—

> " Look to her, Moor; have a quick eye to see;
> *She has deceived her father, and may thee.*"
>
> *Othello*, Act I. Sc. 3.

* In an 18mo. edition of the Gesta Romanorum, published at Leyden, 1555, there is prefixed to the fourth tale, by way of argument, the following remarkable passage. " Justitia nempe et misericordia Deorum maximè est: *ad quos non possumus expeditius et proprius accedere, quàm his ducibus.*" This is *literally* what Shakspeare makes Portia observe in the " *Merchant of Venice.*"

> " But Mercy is above this sceptered sway,
> *   *   *   *   *   *   *   *
> *It is an attribute of God himself;*
> *And earthly power doth then show likest God's,*
> *When mercy seasons justice.*"—Act IV. Sc. 1.

Note 5. Page 27.

"This story, but with a difference of circumstances, ends like the beautiful apologue of the Prodigal Son."—Warton.

Note 6. Page 32.

This fable is very well told by Gower, but with some variations.

[The letters printed in Italics are to be pronounced as separate syllables; the acute mark denotes the emphasis.]

Ere Rom-*e* came to the creánce [1]
Of Christ-*es* faith, it fell perchance
Cæsar, which then was emperour,
Him list-*e* for to do honóur
Untó the temple Apollinis;
And made an image upon this,
The which was cleped [2] Apolló,
Was none so rich in Rom-*e* tho [3].
  Of plate of gold, a beard he had,
The which his breast all over spradde [4].
  Of gold also, withouten fail,
His mantle was of large entayle [5].

1 Belief 2 Called. 3 Then. 4 Spread.
5 Cut; from the French *entailler*.

Be-set with perrey [1] all about.
Forth right he stretched his finger out,
Upon the which he had a ring—
To see it, was a rich-*e* thing,
A fine carbuncle for the nones [2],
Most precious of all stones.
And fell that time in Rom-*e* thus,
There was a clerk, one Lucius,
A courtier, a famous man;
Of every wit [3] somewhat he can,
Out-take [4] that him lacketh rule,
His own estate to guide and rule;
How so it stood of his speaking,
He was not wise in his doing;
But every riot-*e* at last
Must need-*es* fall, and may not last.
After the need of his desert,
So fell this clerk-*e* in pouérte,
And wist not how for to rise
Whereof in many a sundry wise
He cast his wit-*es* here and there,
He looketh nigh, he looketh far.
Fell on a tim-*e* that he come
Into the temple, and heed nome [5]

1 Pearls. 2 Purpose. 3 Knowledge. 4 Except.
5 Took.

Where that the god Apollo stood ;
He saw the riches, and the good [1];
And thought he wold-*e* by some way,
The treasure pick and steal away.
And thereupon so slily wrought,
That his purpóse about he brought.
And went away unaperceived :
Thus hath the man his god deceived—
His ring, his mantle, and his beard,
As he which nothing was afeard,
All privily with him he bare ;
And when the wardens were aware
Of that, their god despoiled was,
They thought it was a wondrous case,
How that a man for any weal,
Durst in so holy plac-*e* steal,
And nam-*e*-ly, so great a thing !—
This tale cam-*e* unto the king,
And was through spoken over-all.
But for to know in special,
What manner man hath done the deed,
They soughten help upon the need,
And maden calculatión,
Whereof by demonstratión
The man was found-*e* with the good.
In judgment, and when he stood,

1 Goods.

The king hath asked of him thus—
"Say, thou unsely[1] Lucius,
Why hast thou done this sacrilege?"
"My lord, if I the cause allege,"
(Quoth he again,) "me-thinketh this,
That I have done nothíng amiss.
Three points there be, which I have do,
Whereof the first-*e* point stands so,
That I the ring have ta'en away—
Unto this point this will I say.
When I the god beheld about,
I saw how he his hand stretched out,
And proffered me the ring to yeve[2];
And I, which wold-*e* gladly live
Out of povérte thro' his largèss,
It underfang[3], so that I guess;
And therefore, am I nought to wite[4].
  And overmóre, I will me 'quit[5],
Of gold that I the mantle took:
Gold in his kind, as saith the book,
Is heavy both, and cold also;
And fór that it was heavy so,
Methought it was no garn-*e*-ment[6]
Unto the god convenient,

1 Foolish. 2 Give. 3 Accepted. 4 Blame.
5 Acquit. 6 Garment.

To clothen him the summer tide[1]:
I thought upon that other side,
How gold is cold, and such a cloth
By reason ought-*e* to be lothe[2]
In winter tim-*e* for the chiel.
And thus thinking thought-*es* fele[3]
As I mine eye about-*e* cast,
His larg-*e* beard-*e* then at last
I saw; and thought anon therefore
How that his father him before,
Which stood upon the sam-*e* place,
Was beardless, with a youngly face.
And in such wise, as ye have heard
I took away the son-*nes* beard,
For that his father had-*e* none,
To make him like; and hereupon
I ask for to be excused."
 Lo, thus where sacrilege is used,
A man can feign his consciénce;
And right upon such evidénce
In lov-*es* cause if I shall treat,
There be of such-*e* small and great,
If they no leisure find-*e* else,
They will not wend-*e* for the bells;

1 Time. 2 Warm. 3 Many.

Not tho' they see the priest at mass—
That will they letten over-pass:
If that they find their lov-*e* there
They stand, and tellen in her ear;
And ask of God none other grace,
Whil-*e* they be in that holy place.
But ere they go, some advantáge
There will they have; and some pillâge
Of goodly word, or of behest;
Or else they taken at the least
Out of her hand a ring or glove,
So nigh, the weder [1] they will hove [2]—
As who saith, "She shall not forget
Now I this token of her have get."
 Thus hallow they the high-*e* feast,
Such theft-*e* may no church arrest [3],
For all is lawful that them liketh,
To whom that els-*e* it misliketh,
And ekè right in the self kind [4]
In great cities men may find.
Thus lusty folk, that make them gay,
And wait upon the holy-day,
In churches, and in minsters eke,
They go the women for to seek,

1 Madder. Sax. Vedan, insanire. 2 Heave or go.
3 Stop. 4 Self-same kind.

And where that such one goeth about,
Before the fairest of the rout;
Where as they sitten all a row,
There will he most his body show;
His crooked kempt[1] and thereon set
An ouch-*e*[2] with a chap-*e*-let,
Or else one of green leaves,
Which late come out-*e* of the greves[3].
All for[4] he should seem fresh:
And thus he looketh on his flesh,
Right as a hawk which hath a sight
Upon the fowl, there he shall light:
And as he were a faëry,
He sheweth him before her eye,
In holy plac-*e* where they sit,
All for to make their heart-*es* flytte[5].
His eye no where will abide,
But look and pry on every side,
On her and her, as him best liketh,
And other while, among he siketh[6];
Thinketh "One of them that was for me,"
And so there thinketh two or three;

1 *i. e.* His crooked or disorderly hair, combed.
2 Brooch. 3 Woods. 4 In order that.
5 Beat, palpitate. 6 Sigheth.

And yet he loveth none at all,
But where as ever his chanc-*e* fall.
And nath-*e*-less to say a sooth
The cause why that he so doth,
Is for to steal a heart or two,
Out of the church ere that he go.
And as I said it here above,
All is that sacrilege of love,
For well may be that he stealeth away,
That he never after yield may[1].
"Tell me for this, my son, anon,
Hast thou done sacrilege, or none[2],
As I have said in this mannèr?"
"My father, as of this mattèr,
I will you tellen readily
What I have done; but tru-*e*-ly
I may excus-*e* mine intent
That I never yet to church went
In such mannér as ye me shrive[3],
For no woman that is alive.
The cause why I have it laft[4],
May be, for[5] I unto that craft,
Am nothing able for to steal,
Though there be women not so fele[6].

1 Restore again. 2 Not. 3 Confess to me.
4 Left. 5 Because. 6 Never so many.

But yet will I not say-*e* this,
When I am where my lady is,
In whom lieth wholly my quarrél,
And she to church or to chapél
Will go to matins or to mess [1],
That time I wait-*e* well and guess.
To church I come, and there I stand,
And tho' [2] I take a book in hand,
My countenance is on the book,
But toward her is all my look;
And if so fallen [3] that I pray
Unto my God, and somewhat say
Of Pater Noster, or of creed,
All is for that I wold-*e* speed,
So that my bead in holy church,
There might-*e* some mirácle wirche [4],
My lady's heart-*e* for to change,
Which ever hath been to me so strange.
So that all my devotión,
And all my contemplatión,
With all mine heart, and my couragé,
Is only sėt on her imáge,
And ever I wait-*e* upon the tide,
If she look any thing aside,

1 Mass. 2 If. 3 Befallen.
4 Work.

That I me may of her advise :
Anon I am with covetise [1]
So smit, that me were lefe [2]
To be in holy church a thief.
But not to steal a vest-*e*-ment,
For that is nothing my talént ;
But I would steal, if that I might,
A′ glad word, or a goodly sight.
And ever ḿy servíce I proffer,
And namely, when she will go, offer ;
For then I lead her, if I may :
For somewhat would I steal away
When I beclip her on the waist ;
Yet at least, I steal a taste.
And other while 'grant merćy [3],'
She saith. And so were I thereby
A lusty touch, a good word eke,
But all the rem-*e*-nant to seek,
Is from my purpose wonder far.
So may I say, as I said ere [4],
In holy church if that I vow,
My con-*sci*-énce I would allow
Be so, that on amend-*e*-ment,
I might-*e* get assign-*e*-ment [5] ;

1 Desire. 2 Fain. 3 Great thanks.
4 Before. 5 Assignation.

Where, for to speed in other place,
Such sacrilege I hold a grace.
"And thus, my father, sooth to say,
In church-*e* right as in the way,
If I might ought of lov-*e* take
Such hansel[1] have I nought forsake.
But finally, I me confess,
There is in me no holinéss,
While her I see in holy stead;
And yet for aught that ever I did,
No sacrilege of her I took,
But[2] it were of word or look,
Or els-*e* if that I her freed[3],
When I towárd offeríng[4] her lead,
Take thereof what I take may,
For els-*e* bear I nought away.
For tho' I wold-*e* ought else have,
All other thing-*es* be so safe,
And kept with such a privilege,
That I may do no sacrilege.
God wote[5] my will nath-*e*-less,
Tho' I must need-*es* keep-*e* peace,

1 "Estreiné; *handselled;* that hath the handseil or *first use of.*" Cotgrave. The word is still extant.

2 Except. 3 This perhaps signifies *made free with.*

4 Altar; *place* of offering. 5 Knows.

And maugre mine so let it pass,
My will thereto is not the lass [6],
If I might otherwise away.
" For this, my father, I you pray
Tell what you thinketh thereupon,
If I thereof have guilt or none."
" Thy will, my son, is for to blame,
The rem-*e*-nant is but a game
That I have thee told as yet.
But take this lore into thy wit,
That all things have time and stead.
The church serveth for the bead [1],
The chamber is of an other speech:
But if thou wistest of the wreche [2],
How sacrilege it hath abought,
Thou woldest better be bethought."

Confessio Amantis, Lib. V.
fol. 122, ed. 1532.

I have transcribed the whole of this tale, (though the latter part of it is but the *moral*) because of the truth and nature with which it is replete. Our churches are filled in this day with too many of the characters described so admirably by Gower.

Ibid. " For two especial reasons took away the beard. The first was, that she *should look more like*

1 Less. 2 Prayer. 3 Work.

her author, and not grow too proud of her golden beard." P. 31.

This idea seems to have arisen from a witticism of Dionysius the tyrant of Syracuse, recorded by Valerius Maximus, lib. 1. cap. 1. ex. 37.

" Idem Epidauri Æsculapio barbam auream demi jussit : quod affirmaret, *non convenire patrem Apollinem imberbem, ipsum barbatum.*"

Note 7. Page 45.

" This story is founded on the twenty-eighth chapter of Aristotle's Secretum Secretorum : in which a queen of India is said to have treacherously sent to Alexander, among other costly presents, the pretended testimonies of her friendship, a girl of exquisite beauty, who having been fed with serpents from her infancy, partook of their nature. If I recollect right, in Pliny, there are accounts of nations whose natural food was poison. Mithridates, king of Pontus, the land of venomous herbs, and the country of the sorceress Medea, was supposed to eat poison. Sir John Mandeville's Travels, I believe, will afford other instances."—Warton.

Note 8. Page 49.

The Church of England holds the same doctrine which this beautiful tale inculcates. " Although in the visible Church, the evil be ever mingled with the good, and sometimes the evil have chief authority in the ministration of the word and sacraments; yet forasmuch as they do not the same in their own name, but in Christ's, and do minister by his commission and authority, we may use their ministry, both in hearing the word of God, and in receiving of the Sacraments. Neither is the effect of Christ's ordinance taken away by their wickedness, nor the grace of God's gifts diminished from such as by faith, and rightly, do receive the sacraments ministered unto them; which be effectual because of Christ's institution and promise, although they be ministered by evil men." Article XXVI.

Note 9. Page 51.

" *A medicinal tongue.*"

Lovell, in his Panzoologicomineralogia has enumerated all the rare properties which ancient medicine attributed to dogs; but what particular virtue the *tongue* was held to possess, does not appear.

This must have been a work of immense labor; yet it is very useless.

NOTE 10. Page 59.

"This story is in the SPECULUM HISTORIALE of Vincent of Beauvais, who wrote about the year 1250." WARTON.

NOTE 11. Page 61.

"*Is not the possession of one thing better than the expectation of two?*"

The Latin text is, "Quotiens ita est quòd aliquid est æquale duobus ei qui est præsens; magis est adhærendum." Literally, "How often does it happen that one thing is valued as much as two by him who is present: [or, by him who has it in possession:] It is therefore to be adhered to the most." The sense answers to the English proverb, "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush."

NOTE 12. Page 77.

"Allexius, or Alexis, was canonised. This story is taken from his legend. In the metrical "Lives of the Saints," his life is told in a sort of measure different from that of the rest, and not very com-

mon in the earlier stages of our poetry. It begins thus:—

"Listeneth all, and hearkeneth me,
Young and old-*e*, bond and free,
And I you tellen soon,
How a stout man, gent and free,
Began this world-*es* weal to flee,
Yborn he was in Rome.

"In Rom-*e* was a doughty man,
That was y-cleped Eufemian,
Man of much might;
Gold and silver he had enows,
Hall and bowers, oxen and plows,
And very well it dight."

When Alexius returns home in disguise, and asks his father about his son, the father's feelings are thus described.

"So soon as he spake of his son,
The good man, as was his wone [1],
Gan to sigh sore;
His heart fell as cold as stone,
The tears fellen to his ton [2],
On his beard hoar.

1 Wont. 2 Toes.

At his burial, many miracles are wrought on the sick.

"With mochel[1] sighs, and mochel song,
That holy corse, them all among
Bishops to church-*e* bare.

"Amidst right the high street,
So much folk him gone meet,
That they rest a stonde[2],
All they sighed that to him come,
And healed were very soon,
Of feet, and eke of honde."

"The history of Saint Alexius is told entirely in the same words in the GESTA ROMANORUM, and in the LEGENDA AUREA of Jacobus de Voraigne[3], translated through a French medium, by Caxton. This work of Jacobus does not consist solely of the legends of the saints, but is interspersed *multis aliis pulcherrimis et peregrinis historiis*, with many other most beautiful and strange histories[4]."—WARTON.

As it may be amusing to the reader to compare

1 Many. 2 A moment.

3 " Hystor. lxxxix. fol. clviii. edit. 1479, fol. and in Vincent of Beauvais, who quotes GESTA ALEXII SPECUL. HIST. Lib. xviii. cap. 43. seq. f. 241. 6." WARTON.

4 Warton seems to be in error respecting this work, which he confounds with " THE LIVES OF THE FATHERS, translated out of

the translation in the text with that executed by the venerable patriarch of the press, William Caxton, in the fifteenth century, I am tempted to transcribe it. There are many little additional touches of manners which the antiquary will value; and while the general reader smiles at the primitive simplicity with which the story is narrated, he will, it is presumed, derive some pleasure from the strong contrast afforded by the past and the present æra— from the elevated situation on which he may seem to stand: a being, as it were, of another sphere; asserting the pre-eminence of civilization over uncultivated life: the polite refinement of modern manners, over the rude character of remote and barbarous times.

Here foloweth the lyfe of saynt Alexis.

And fyrst of his name.

Alexis is as moche as to saye as goynge out of the lawe of maryage for to keep virginite for

Frensshe into Englisshe by William Caxton of Westminster, late deed, and fynisshed it at the last day of hys lyff." The GOLDEN LEGEND (properly so called) consists *wholly* of the legends of the Saints; but the LIVES OF THE FATHERS *is* interspersed with stories of the character given above.

goddes sake, and to renounce all the pomp and rychesses of the worlde for to lyue in pouerte.

In the tyme that Archadius and Honorius were emperours of Rome, there was in Rome a ryght noble lord named Eufemyen, which was chefe and aboue all other lordes aboute the emperours, and had under his power a thousande knyghtes. He was a moche iust man to all men, and also he was pyteous and mercyfull unto ye poore. For he had dayly thre tables set and couered for to fede ye orphans, poor wydowes, and pylgryms. And he ete at the houre of none with good and religyous persones. His wyfe y^t^ was named Aglaes ledde a religyous lyfe. But bycause they had no childe, they prayed to god to send them a sone y^t^ myght be theyr heyre after them, of theyr honour and goodes. It was so that god herde theyre prayers, and beheld theyre bounte and good lyvynge, and gave unto them a sone which was named Alexis, whome they dyd to be taught and enfourmed in all scyences and honours. After this, they maryed hym unto a fayre damoysel, which was of ye lygnage of ye emperour of Rome. Whan the daye of ye weddynge was comen to even, Alexis beynge in the chambre w^h^

his wyfe alone, began to enfourme and enduce her to drede god and serue hym, and were all that night togyder in right good doctryne, and fynably he gave to his wyfe his rynge and the buckle of golde of hys gyrdle, bothe bounden in a lytel cloth of purple, and sayd to her. Fayre sister, haue this, and kepe it as longe as it shall please our lord god, and it shall be a token bytweene us, and he gyue you grace to kepe truly your virgynitie. After this he toke of golde and syluer a grete somme, and departed alone fro Rome, and founde a shyppe in which he sayled in to Grece. And fro thens went in to Surrye[1], and came to a city called Edessia, and gaue there all his money for the loue of God, and clad hym in a cote, and demaunded almes for goddes sake lyke a poore man tofore the chirche of our lady, and what he lefte of the almesses aboue his necessity, he gaue it to other for goddes sake, and euery sondaye he was houseled and receyved the sacrament, suche a lyfe he ladde longe. Some of ye messengers y^t his father had sent to seche hym through all the partyes of the world came to seek hym in the sayd cyte of Edyssia and gaue unto hym theyr almes, he syttynge tofore the chirche with other poore people, but they knew hym not, and he knewe well them,

1 Syria.

and thanked our Lord, sayenge—I thank the fayre lorde Jesu Chryst y^t thou vouchest safe to call me, and to take almes in thy name of my seruants, I praye the to perfourm in me that which thou hast begon. Whan the messengers were returned to Rome, and Eufemyen his fader sawe they had not founden his sone, he layd hym down upon a matres stratchynge on the erth, waylynge and sayd thus, I shal holde me here and abyde tyll y^t I have tydynges of my sone. And ye wyfe of his sone Alexis sayd wepynge to Eufemyen, I shal not departe out of your hous, but shal make me semblable and lyke to the turtle, whiche after y^t she hath lost her felowe wyl take none other, but all her lyfe after lyveth chaste. In lyke wyse, I shall refuse all felowshyp unto ye tyme y^t I shall knowe where my ryghte swete frende is becomen. After that Alexis had done his penaunce by ryght grete poverte in ye sayd cyte, and ledde a ryght holy lyfe by ye space of xvij yere, there was a voyce herde y^t came fro god unto the chirche of our lady and said to the porter, Make the man of god to entre in, for he is worthy to haue the kingdome of heven, and the spiryte of god resteth on hym. Whan the clerke coude not fynde ne knowe hym amonge the other poor men, he prayed unto god to shewe to hym who it was.

And a voyce came from heven and sayd, he sytteth without tofore the entre of the chirche. And so the clerke founde hym, and prayed hym humbly that he wolde come into ye chirche. Whan this myracle came to the knowlege of the people, and Alexis sawe that men dyd to hym honour and worshyp, anone for to eschewe vaynglory he departed fro thens and came into Grece when he toke shyppe, and entred for to go to Cecyle [1], but as god wold there arose a grete wynde which made the shyppe to arryue at the porte of Rome. When Alexis sawe this, anone he sayd to hymselfe, By the grace of god I wyl charge no man of Rome, I wyl go to my fader's hous in suche wyse as I shal not be beknowen of ony person. And when he was within Rome he mette Eufemyen his fader which came fro ye palays of ye emperours w^{h} a grete meyny [2] followynge hym. And Alexis hys sone a poore man ranne cryenge and sayd. Sergeaunt of god haue pyte on me that am a poor pylgrym, and receyve me into thy hous for to haue my sustenaunce of ye relefe y^{t} shall come fro thy borde, that god [may] blysse the, and haue pyte on thy sone, which is also a pylgrym. Whan Eufemyen herde speke of his sone, anone his herte began to melt and sayd to hys servauntes, Whiche

1 Sicily. 2 Many; NORM. FR. Commonly a *household.*

of you wyl haue pyte on this man, and take y[e] cure and charge of hym. I shall deliver hym from hys servage and make him free, and shall gyve hym of myn herytage. And anone he commysed[1] hym to one of his servauntes, and commaunded y[t] his bedde sholde be made in a corner of y[e] hall, whereas comers and goers myght se hym. And the servaunt to whom Alexis was commaunded to kepe made anone his bedde under the stayr and steppes of the hall. And there he lay right like a poore wretche, and suffred many vylanyes and despytes of the servauntes of his fader, which oft tymes cast and threwe on hym y[e] wasshynge of disshes and other fylth, and dyd to hym many euill turnes, and mocked hym, but he neuer complayned, but suffered all pacyently for the loue of god. Finally whan he had ledde this right holy lyfe w[t]in his faders hous in fastynge, in prayenge, and in penaunce by the space of vij yere, and knewe that he sholde soon dye, he prayed the servaunt y[t] kepte hym to gyve hym a pece of parchement and ynke. And therein he wrote by ordre all hys lyfe and how he was maryed by the commaundement of his fader, and what he had sayd to hys wife, and of the tokens of hys rynge and bocle of hys gyrdell,

1 Committed.

that he had gyuen to her at his departynge, and what he had suffered for goddes sake. And all this dyd he for to make his fader to understande that he was his sone. After this whan it pleased god for to shewe and manyfest the vyctory of our lorde Jesu Christ in his servaunt Alexis. On a tyme on a sondaye after masse herynge all the people in the chirche, there was a voyce herde from god cryenge and sayenge as is sayd Mathei undecimo capitulo. Come unto me ye that labour and be trauayled, I shall comfort you. Of which voyce all the people were abasshed, whiche anone fell downe unto the erth. And the voyce sayd agayne. Seche ye the servaunt of god, for he prayeth for all Rome. And they sought hym, but he was not founden.

¶ Alexis in a mornynge on a good frydaye gaue his soul to god, and departed out of this worlde. And ye same daye all the people assembled at Saynt Peters churche and prayed god y^t^ he wolde shewe to them where the man of god myght be founden y^t^ prayed for Rome. And a voyce was herde that came fro god that sayd. Ye shall fynde hym in the hous of Eufemyen. And the people said unto Eufemyen, Why hast thou hydde fro us, thou hast suche grace in thy hous. And Eufemyen answered. God knoweth that I knowe no thynge therof.

¶ Archadius and Honorius yt were emperours at Rome, and also ye pope Innocent commaunded yt men shold go unto Eufemyens hous for to enquyre diligently tydynges of the man of god. Eufemyen went tofore with his servauntes for to make redy his hous agaynst the comynge of the Pope and emperours. And whan Alexis wyfe understode the cause, and how a voyce was herde that came fro god, sayenge. Seche ye ye man of god in Eufemyens hous, anon she sayd to Eufemyen. Syr se yf this poore man that ye have so long kepte and herberowed be the same man of god, I have well marked that he hath lyued a right fayre and holy lyfe. He hath euery sondaye receyved the sacrament of the awter. He hath ben ryght religyous in fastynge, in wakynge, and in prayer, and hath suffred pacyently and debonayrly of our servauntes many vylanyes. And when Eufemyen had herde all this, he ran toward Alexis and founde hym deed. He dyscouered his visage, whiche shone and was bryght as ye face of an aungell. And anone he returned towarde ye emperours and sayd. We have founden the man of god that we sought. And tolde unto them how he had herberowed hym, and how the holy man had lyued, and also how he was deed, and that he helde a byll or lettre in his

hande which they might not drawe out. Anone the emperours with the pope went to Eufemyens hous, and came tofore the bedde where Alexis lay deed and sayd. How well that we be synners, yet neuertheless we governe ye worlde, and loo here is ye pope the generall fader of all the chirche, and gyve us the lettre y^t^ thou holdest in thyn hande, for to knowe what is the wrytyng of it. And the pope wente tofore and toke the lettre, and toke it to his notary for to rede. And ye notary redde tofore the pope, the emperours and all the people. And whan he came to the poynt that made mencyon of his fader and of his moder, and also of his wyfe, and that by the enseygnes[1] that he had gyuen to his wyfe at his departynge, his rynge and bocle of his gyrdle wrapped in a lytell purple clothe at his departynge. Anone Eufemyen fell downe in a swoone, and whan he came agayne to hymselfe he began to draw his heres and bette his brest and fell downe on the corps of Alexis his sone, and kyssed it, wepyng and cryenge in ryght grete sorrowe of herte, sayenge. Alas ryght swete son wherefore hast thou made me to suffre suche sorowe, thou sawest what sorowe and heuynes we had for the, alas why haddest thou no pite on us in so long tyme, how myghtest

1 Signs, tokens.

thou suffre thy moder and thy father wepe so moche for the, and thou sawest it well without takyng pyte on us. I supposed to have herd some tydynges of the, and now I se the lye deed, whiche sholdest be my solace in myne age, alas what solace may I haue that se my right dere son deed, me were better dye than lyve. Whan the moder of Alexis sawe and herd this, she came rennynge lyke a lyonesse and cryed, Alas! alas! drawing her heere in grete sorrowe, scratchynge her pappes with her nayles sayenge. These pappes haue gyven the souke, and whan she myght not come to the corps for the foyson of people y^t was come thyder, she cried and said. Make rome and waye to me sorrowfull moder y^t I may se my desyre and my dere son that I have engendered and nourisshed. And as soon as she came to the body of her sone, she fell downe on it pyteously and kyssed it, sayenge thus. Alas for sorowe my dere son, ye lyght of myn age, why hast thou made us suffre so moche sorow, thou sawest thy fader, and me thy sorowefull moder so ofte wepe for the, and woldest neuer make to us semblaunt of sone[1]. O all ye y^t haue ye hert of a moder, wepe ye with me upon my dere sone, whome I haue had in my hous vij. yere as a

1 That is—*Shew that thou wert our son.*

poore man, to whome my servauntes have done moche vylany. A! fayre sone thou hast suffred them right swetely and debonayrly. Alas, thou that were my trust, my comforte, and my solace in myn olde age, how mightest thou hyde ye from me, that am thy sorowfull moder, who shall gyve to myn eyen from hens forth a fountayn of teres for to make payne unto ye sorowe of my herte. And after this came the wyfe of Alexis in wepyng throwynge herselfe upon the body, and with grete syghes and heuyness sayd, Right swete frende and spouse whome longe I haue desyred to se, and chastely I haue to ye kept myselfe lyke a turtle y^t alone without make[1] wayleth and wepeth, and loo here is my ryght swete husbonde, whome I have desyred to se alyue, and now I se hym deed, fro hens forth I wote not in whome I shall haue fyaunce ne hope. Certes my solace is deed, and in sorowe I shall be unto ye deth. For now fortho[2] I am ye most unhappy amonge all women, and rekened amonge the sorowfull wydowes. And after these pyteous complayntes ye people wepte for the deth of Alexis. The pope made the body to be taken up and to be put into a shryne, and borne unto ye chirche. And whan it was borne through ye cyte ryght grete

1 Partner, companion. 2 Henceforward.

foyson [1] of people came agaynst it and sayd. The man of god is founden y[t] the cyte sought. Whatsomever sike body myght touch the shryne, he was anone heled of his malady.

There was a blynde man y[t] recouered hys syght, and lame and other he heled. The emperour made grete foyson of golde and syluer to be throwen amonge y[e] people for to make waye y[t] the shryne myght passe. And thus, by grete labour and reuerence, was borne the body of Saint Alexis unto the churche of Saynt Bonyface, y[e] glorious martyr. And there was the body put in a shryne moche honourably made of golde and syluer, y[e] seuenth daye of Juyll [2]. And al the people rendred thankynges and laudes to our lorde God for his grete myracles, unto whome be gyuen honour, laude and glory in secula seculorum. Amen [3].

From the preceding narratives, the reader may discover some of the most prominent features of Roman Catholic worship. Let us glance at the story. Here is a young man connected by the closest of all

1 Plenty, number. 2 July.

3 From the Golden Legend, Ed. 1527. Printed by Wynkyn de Worde, "*at the sygne of the Sonne,*" in Fleet-street.

ties to a deserving female, whom he marries to read a theological lecture, and then leave a prey to irremediable regret. He associates with a number of squalid wretches, and exists on the precarious bounty of strangers in the most unprofitable, not to say knavish indolence. In the mean time his broken hearted parents are devoured by an intense anxiety, of which he is totally regardless. I pass the miraculous part of this veritable history; if Prince Hohenlohe's marvels deserve credit, it would be incongruous and inconsistent to refuse it here. Our "pious Æneas," disguised in the accumulated filth of seventeen years, returns to his father's house. Here he breeds a race of vermin; and luxuriously battens upon the garbage, which the servants, aware of his peculiar taste, plentifully, and one might think, properly, communicated. All this while he is an eye-witness, and an ear-witness, of the misery his absence occasions; and, as if to complete the perfection of such a character, he leaves behind him a scroll, of which the only effect must necessarily be to arouse a keener agony, and to quicken a dying despair. And this is the monstrous compound, which a voice from Heaven proclaims holy, and which miracles are called in to sanction! This is to be emphatically, a "MAN OF GOD!" He, who neglects every relative

duty; he who is a cruel and ungrateful son, a bad husband, and careless master; he whose whole life is to consume time, not to employ it to vegetate, but not to exist—to dream away life, with every sense locked up, every capability destroyed, every good principle uncultivated—and that too in the most loathsome and degraded condition—THIS, is to be a *Man of God!*

That the story before us contains a faithful picture of the times, and of many succeeding times; that it describes the prevailing tenets of Popery, will be generally admitted. Some, indeed, whose charity "hopeth the best," will be ready to believe, that the colours of an imaginative mind have been scattered along it; and that, however correspondent the outline may be, the sketch has been filled up by the aid of exaggeration, while embellishment has stepped into the place of truth. But we have unfortunately too many prototypes in nature; history is too copious in examples to oblige us to have recourse to fiction for an illustrative comment. The life of Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the order of Jesus, presents a very singular and apposite confirmation of the remark; and I am happy to have received a most obliging permission to extract an able article on this subject from a late number of the Retrospective Review—a work, which I have no hesita-

tion in commending, whether for the soundness of its principles, the depth and accuracy of its researches, or the high intellectual superiority with which it has hitherto been conducted [1].

"We must commence our history in the year 1491, which was rendered important by the birth of Ignatius, who first saw the light in Spain, in the district called Guipuscoa. Being descended from an ancient family, the lords of Ognez and Loyola, and moreover well-shaped and of a lively temper, his father destined him for the court, where he was sent at an early age as page to king Ferdinand. Incited, however, by the example of his brothers, who had distinguished themselves in the army, and his own love of glory, he soon grew weary of the inactivity of a court life, and determined to seek renown in

1 This production deserves every share of public favour; and large as the present sale is said to be, I have no doubt of its increase. The nature of the publication, confined as it is to past ages of literature, will probably preclude that circulation to which its merits justly entitle it; but no man, who takes an interest in the progress of the human mind, and who would know something of works formerly so popular, though now subjected to the mutabilities of human caprice, "to time and chance, which happeneth to all," will neglect an occasion of acquiring as much as investigation can achieve, or ability communicate. In support of these remarks I refer to an article on CHAUCER contained in the Seventeenth Number—not perhaps as the *best*, but as one among many good.

war. He applied himself with great assiduity and success to his military exercises, and soon qualified himself for the service of his prince. It is said, that on all occasions he displayed great bravery and conduct; but the writers of his life being more interested in the detail of his theological warfare, have passed over his military achievements with a slight notice, except the affair which was the more immediate cause of what is called his conversion. This was the siege of Pampeluna by the French; on which occasion Don Ignatius, then about thirty years of age, displayed great gallantry, and was wounded by a splinter in his left leg, and his right was almost at the same moment broken by a cannon shot. The wounds were for a time considered dangerous; and the physicians declared, that unless a change took place before the middle of the night they would prove fatal: it was therefore thought adviseable that the sacrament should be administered to him. This fortunately happened to be the eve of St. Peter, for whom Ignatius had a special veneration, and in whose praise he had formerly indited certain Spanish verses. This early piety, says Maffei, produced no small fruit, for before the critical time of the night arrived, the apostle appeared to him in a vision, bringing 'healing on his wings.'

" Another of his biographers conjectures that the prince of the apostles effected his restoration to health, because he had a special interest in the cure of a man destined by heaven to maintain the authority of the Holy See against heresy. However this may be, Ignatius assuredly recovered, although a slight deformity remained on his leg, caused by the protrusion of a bone under the knee. Grievously afflicted that the symmetry of his person should be thus spoiled, he determined to have the obnoxious bone cut off, and the operation was performed almost without producing a change of countenance in the hardy soldier. Notwithstanding all his care, however, his right leg always remained somewhat shorter than the left. Restrained from walking, and confined to his bed, he requested, in order to amuse himself, to be furnished with some books of chivalry, the sort of reading which chiefly occupied the attention of people of quality at that time; but instead of *Palmerin of England*, or *Amadis of Gaul*, they brought him *The Lives of the Saints*. At first he read them without any other view than that of beguiling the time; but by degrees he began to relish them, and at length became so absorbed in the study of asceticism, that he passed whole days in studying *The Lives of the Saints*, and finally made a

resolution to imitate men who had so distinguished themselves by warring against their own flesh and blood. These aspirations were succeeded by his former desire for military glory; but after various mental conflicts, and a great deal of reflection, the charms of penance at length completely triumphed.

"For the purpose of gratifying this passion, he determined to go barefoot to the Holy Land, to clothe himself in sackcloth, to live upon bread and water, to sleep on the bare ground, and to choose a desert for his abode; but in the mean time, as his leg was not sufficiently well to allow him to carry his wishes into effect, in order in a slight degree to satisfy the longings of his soul, he spent part of the night in weeping for his sins; and one night, prostrating himself before an image of the blessed Virgin, he consecrated himself to the service of her and her Son. Immediately he heard a terrible noise. The house shook, the windows were broken, and a rent made in the wall, which was long after, and probably may at this day be seen. These extraordinary signs are not noticed by Maffei; but his less cautious brother, Ribadeneira, relates the fact, although he is in some doubt whether it was a sign of the approbation of the Deity, or of the rage of the devils, at seeing their prey ravished from them.

"Another night the Virgin appeared to him, holding her Son in her arms; a sight which so replenished him with spiritual unction, that from that time forward his soul became purified, and all images of sensual delight were for ever razed from his mind. He felt himself re-created, and spent all his time in reading, writing, and meditating on performing something extraordinary. At length he sallied forth from Loyola, where he had been conveyed after the siege of Pampeluna, and took the road to Montserrat, a monastery of Benedictines, at that time famous for the devotions of pilgrims, making by the way a vow of perpetual chastity, one of the instruments with which he proposed to arm himself in his contemplated combats. He had not ridden far before he fell in with a Moor, with whom he entered into conversation, and amongst other topics engaged in an argument about the immaculate purity of the blessed Virgin. The Moor agreed, that until the birth of Christ, Mary preserved her virginity; but he maintained, that when she became a mother she ceased to be a virgin. The knight heard this treason against his lady with the greatest horror; and the Moor, perceiving the discussion was tending to a disagreeable point, set spurs to his horse and made off. The champion of the honour of the blessed

Virgin was for a while in doubt whether it was required of him to revenge the blasphemies of the Moor. He, however, followed him, until he arrived at a place where the road parted, one branch of it leading to Montserrat, and the other to a village whither the Moor was going; and being mindful of the expedient which errant knights of old frequently adopted to solve a doubt, he very wisely determined to be guided by his horse, and if the animal took the same road as the Moor, to take vengeance on him; if not, then to pursue his way in peace to Montserrat. The horse being of a peaceable disposition, took the road to Montserrat; and having arrived at a village, at the foot of the mountain on which the monastery stands, his rider purchased the equipage of a pilgrim, and proceeding to the monastery, sought out an able spiritual director, and confessed his sins, which he did in so full and ample a manner, and interrupted it with such torrents of tears, that his confession lasted three days. The next step which Ignatius took was to seek out a poor man, to whom, stripping himself to his shirt, he privately gave all his clothes; then, putting on his pilgrim's weeds, he returned to the church of the monastery [1]. Here,

1 Let the reader here turn to the " Life of Alexius," and particularly to pages 66, 67, of this volume.

remembering that it was customary for persons to watch a whole night in their arms, previously to their being knighted, he determined in like manner to keep his vigil before the altar of his Lady; and suspending his sword upon a pillar, in token of his renouncing secular warfare, he continued in prayer the whole night, devoting himself to the Saviour and the blessed Virgin, as their true knight, according to the practice of chivalry.

"Early in the morning he departed from Montserrat, leaving his horse to the monastery, and receiving in exchange certain penitential instruments from his ghostly father. With his staff in his hand, his scrip by his side, bare-headed, one foot unshod, (the other being still weak from his wound) he walked briskly to Manreza, a small town about three leagues from Montserrat. Resolved to make Manreza illustrious by his exemplary penance, he took up his abode at the hospital for pilgrims and sick persons; he girded his loins with an iron chain, put on a hair shirt, disciplined himself three times a day, laid upon the bare ground, and lived upon bread and water for a week. Not content with these mortifications, he sometimes added to his hair shirt a girdle of certain herbs full of thorns and prickles. He spent seven hours every day in prayer, and frequently

continued a length of time without motion. Considering, however, that this maceration of his body would advance him but a little way to heaven, he next resolved to stifle in himself all emotions of pride and self-love, and for this end, he studiously rendered himself disgusting, neglecting his person, and, to hide his quality, assuming a clownish carriage. With his face covered with dirt, his hair matted, and his beard and nails of a fearful length, but his soul filled with inward satisfaction, he begged his bread from door to door, a spectacle of scorn and ridicule to all the inhabitants and children of Manreza [1]. He persevered in this course, notwithstanding the suggestions of the wily enemy of mankind, who wished to tempt him to the world again, until a report was circulated that he was a person of quality, and the feelings of the people were converted from scorn and ridicule to admiration and reverence, whereupon he retreated to a cave in the neighbourhood [2]. The gloom of his new abode excited in him a lively, vigorous spirit of penance, in which he revelled with the utmost fervour, and without the least restraint. He chastised his body four or five times

1 Compare with this account what is said of Alexius in page 67, *et seq.*

2 Vide page 69.

a day with his iron chain, abstained from food until exhausted nature compelled him to refresh himself with a few roots, and instead of praying seven hours a day, he did nothing but pray from morning until night, and again, from night until morning, lamenting his transgressions, and praising the mercies of God. These excessive indulgencies mightily impaired his health, and brought on a disease of the stomach, which at intervals afflicted him, until the time of his death: the spiritual joys which they had formerly brought, suddenly disappeared, he became melancholy, had thoughts of destroying himself, and then recollecting to have read of a hermit who, having fruitlessly petitioned for a favour from God, determined to eat nothing until his prayers were heard, he also resolved to do the same; he persevered for a week, and then at the command of his spiritual director left off fasting. His troubles ceased, and he now began to wax into a saint. He had a vision of the mystery of the Holy Trinity, of which he spoke, although he could only just read and write, with so much light, and with such sublime expressions, that the most ignorant were instructed, and the most learned delighted. Nay, he wrote down his conceptions of this mystery, but we lament to say, that his manuscript was unfortunately lost. His

visions began to multiply, the most remarkable of which was an extacy, which lasted eight days, neither more nor less. These illuminations were so convincing, that he was heard to say, that had the revelations never been recorded in Scripture, he would still have maintained them to the last drop of his blood. The heavenly favours he thus received he opened in part to his ghostly directors, but with this exception, he shut them up in his own heart. His efforts to conceal himself from the eyes of men were vain, his austerities and extacies, aided by the belief of his being a man of quality in disguise, attracted crowds of people to see and hear him, and he was pronounced—A SAINT.

* * * * * *

"Notwithstanding that the necessary consequence of actions like these was to attract the attention of the world, he is described as being desirous of withdrawing himself from the notice and esteem of men, and he resolved to carry into execution a design, which he had long nourished, of visiting the Holy Land. He accordingly proceeded to Barcelona, where he embarked on board a ship about to sail for Italy, landed at Gayeta in 1523, and proceeded on foot to Rome, where he received the Pope's benediction, and obtained permission to make a pil-

grimage to Jerusalem. From Rome he went to Venice, where he embarked, and arrived at Jerusalem, on the 4th of September in that year.

" Here his heart was touched with the most tender devotion, and he began to deliberate whether he should fix his residence on the illustrious soil of Judæa, and apply himself to the conversion of the infidels. For his greater satisfaction, he consulted the superior of the Franciscans, who had the care of the Holy Sepulchre; the superior remitted him to the Father Provincial, who counselled him to return to Europe, but Ignatius, having some scruples about abandoning his design, answered the Provincial, that nothing but the fear of displeasing God should make him leave the Holy Land. " Why then," said the Provincial, " you shall be gone to-morrow; I have power from the holy see to send back what pilgrims I please, and you cannot resist me without offending God." Ignatius submitted without another word, left Jerusalem on the following day, and arrived at Venice about the end of January, 1524. A Spanish merchant at this place forced him to take fifteen or sixteen reals, but on his coming to Ferrara he gave a real to the first beggar that held out his hand, a second came, and he gave him another. These

liberalities drew all the beggars to him, and he refused none so long as his money lasted, and when he had done, he began to beg himself, whereupon they cried out, *A saint, a saint*[1] *!* He needed no more to make him leave the place; he continued his journey through Lombardy to Genoa, where he embarked for Barcelona. During his voyage from the Holy Land, he had reflected a good deal on the subject of converting the infidels, and considering that without the aid of human learning his efforts would be comparatively inefficacious, he determined to put himself under the care of Ardebalo, the master of the grammar school at Barcelona. He was now thirty-three years of age. On his arrival at Barcelona, he fell to the study of the rudiments of the Latin language, and went every day to school with the little children; but whilst his master was explaining the rules of grammar, he was deeply engaged with the mysteries of faith. This distraction of attention he ascribed to the powers of darkness, and made a vow to continue his studies with greater application, nay, he requested of Ardebalo to require the same task from him as the rest of the boys, and if he did not perform it, to punish him as he punished them, by re-

1 See page 67.

primands and stripes. We do not learn whether the master was necessitated to quicken his scholar's diligence in the way suggested, but it is certain that he now proceeded in his studies with much greater facility. About this time, he read the *Enchiridion Militis Christiani* of Erasmus, which had been recommended to him, but finding that it wanted fervour, and in fact, diminished his devotion and exercises of piety, (and was probably reducing him to a reasonable Christian) he threw away the book, and conceived such a horror of it, that he would never read it more, and when he became General of the Jesuits, ordered that the society should not read the works of Erasmus. Being re-established in his health, he renewed his austerities, but, for the sake of study, retrenched a part of his seven hours of prayer. John Pascal, a devout youth, the son of the woman with whom he lodged, would frequently rise in the night to observe what Ignatius was doing in his chamber, and sometimes he saw him on his knees, at others, prostrate on the ground, and once he *thought* he saw him elevated from the earth, and surrounded with light, or as Butler expresses it in his *Hudibras*,

> "Hang like Mahomet in th' air,
> Or Saint Ignatius at his prayer."

" But whilst Ignatius was labouring after his own perfection, he did not neglect that of his neighbour, employing those hours which were not devoted to study, in withdrawing souls from vice, by striking examples and edifying discourses. Remarkable instances of his success are related, and on one occasion his interference cost him, to his inward delight, a sound external bastinado, which occasioned fifty days of sickness and pain. Having continued nearly two years at Barcelona, he was advised to pursue a course of philosophy at the University of Alcala, to which place he went accompanied by three young men, whom he had brought into the way of virtue, and who had desired to accompany him : to them he added a fourth on his arrival at Alcala. He had no sooner arrived than he began to study with such extreme eagerness, applying himself to so many sciences at once, that his understanding became confused, and his labour produced no fruits. Disheartened with his little progress, he employed his time in prayer, in catechising children, and attending the sick in the hospital. The marvellous changes effected by Ignatius in Alcala through his preaching and remonstrances, at length gave rise to a rumour that he was either a magician or a heretic, which coming to the ears of the inqui-

sitors at Toledo, they were induced to believe that he was an Illuminato or Lutheran, and in order to investigate the matter, they came to Alcala to take his examination upon the spot. After an exact inquiry, Ignatius was pronounced innocent, but was admonished by the Grand Vicar, that he and his companions, not belonging to any religious order, must not dress in uniform habits, and he forbid him to go bare-foot, with both which commands he complied, and ever after wore shoes.

* * * * * *

" About this time, Ignatius being afflicted with indisposition, partly from his austerities, and partly from the climate of Paris, was advised by his physicians to try the benefit of his native air; an advice which he the more readily adopted, partly because three of his companions had some business to transact in Spain before they could absolutely renounce all their worldly goods; and partly that he might repair the scandal of his youth by his present virtuous demeanour. Having committed the care of the society to Faber, he departed for his native country; making use, however, of a horse, on account of the weakness of his foot. He went to Azpetia, a town near the castle of Loyola, where the clergy, hearing of his approach, assembled to

receive him. He refused, however, to take up his abode with his brother at the castle of Loyola; and instead of making use of the bed and provisions which he sent to him at the hospital, he chose to lie on the bed of a poor man, taking care, however, every morning to disarrange the other, as if he had slept in it; and distributed the provisions he received from Loyola amongst the poor, and begged his bread about the town. Once only he went, 'upon compulsion,' to visit the inmates of Loyola, the sight of which renewed the memory of his former life, and inspired him with an ardent love of mortification. In consequence, he forthwith put on a sharp hair shirt, girded himself with a great chain of iron, and disciplined himself every night. He catechised the children, he preached every Sunday, and two or three times in the week besides; until, the churches not being able to contain the great crowds who came to hear him, he was obliged to hold forth in the open fields, 'et auditores arbores complere cogerentur.' The first time he preached, he told the assembly that he had been, for a long time, grievously afflicted by a sin of his youth:—he had, he said, with other boys, broken into a garden, and carried off a quantity of fruit; an offence for which an innocent person was sent to

prison, and condemned to pay damages. "I, therefore," he proceeded, "am the offender; he is the innocent person: I have sinned—I have erred!" and he called before him the man, who by chance was present, and gave him, before the public, two farms, which belonged to him. We shall pass over the particular circumstances of success which attended his preaching: it will be sufficient to apprize our readers, that as soon as he preached against the immodest attire of the women, it disappeared; that the same day he denounced gaming, the gamesters threw their dice into the river; that the courtezans made holy pilgrimages on foot, and the blasphemers ceased to curse.

* * * * * *

"Although this sketch of the life of Ignatius Loyola bears no proportion to the details which have been given of it by about twenty biographers, it is, we conceive, sufficiently ample to enable the reader to form a correct judgment of his character. It has been thought that the society of Jesuits owed its origin to the enthusiasm, rather than the policy, of its founder [1]. Let the reader trace him from his conversion to his death, follow him through his rigorous infliction of self-punishment, his fastings

1 Robertson's Charles V., v. iii. b. 6. Bayle, Art. Loyola.

until exhausted nature was ready to sink under his severe austerities, his voluntary beggary, his growing reputation for sanctity, his flight from public notice and reverence whilst he pursued the very means to obtain them, his being stamped a saint, his application to human learning, the unfolding of his views, the alteration in his austerities, in his habits of life and mode of dress, and he will probably be of a different opinion. Enthusiasm was doubtless the inspiring fountain at which he first drank; not so much, however, the enthusiasm of an ardent and noble mind, as a preternatural excitement caused by the sort of reading to which accident invited him, working on a debilitated and feverish frame. His enthusiasm, after the first ebullition, seems to have had a method in it; it led him to just so much voluntary suffering as was necessary to gain him the reputation of a saint, and it was probably at that species of fame that he at first aimed: his affected humility was ostentation; his pretended seclusion, notoriety; he did not conceal from his left hand what his right hand did, he distributed the alms he had acquired to beggars, and as soon as he had done began to beg himself, to the admiration of the professors of mendicity; and it was no wonder they should cry out, A SAINT,

A SAINT! He did not retire into trackless deserts like the 'eremites' of old, but like a retiring beauty, suffered his flight from the world to be seen, and was shocked when he was followed. Whilst rendering himself an object of loathing and disgust, and attenuating his body to the proper point of sanctity, it was swelling with holy pride and inward gratulation; but as soon as this part of his object was once accomplished, he threw off his tattered robes, and iron chain, he diminished his hours of prayer, and grander prospects and mightier power began to open before him. Not that he would have hesitated to continue them for the purpose of preserving his reputation or securing an important object; but what is to be remarked, is, that those things which he had formerly considered indispensable, were now no longer thought so, and that without any change of the circumstances which originally made them necessary, and it is not sufficient to resort to visions to account for the change. For, although an enthusiastic imagination might see such things 'in dim perspective,' the whole of the conduct of Ignatius marks him to be a cool persevering and calculating politician[1], and the visions themselves ceased, when

1 Though his biographers considered him of an ardent temperament, his physicians thought him of a phlegmatic constitution.

no longer required to spread his name and consolidate his power. Though influenced by motives of ambition, they were not those of wealth or rank, but of real, substantial power; and, although some obscure thoughts of framing a religious Order might have obtruded upon his meditations at Manreza, it is probable that the precise nature of it was only gradually unfolded, and not completed until he was about to leave Paris *."

The latter part of the life of Ignatius Loyola, bears no proportion to its outset. Enthusiasm had abated, and policy was the cynosure of his subsequent career. In this he differs from Alexius; as he became more active, he became less a SAINT; and as his mind opened, and reason assumed her proper station, he gradually lost the fanatic in the designing founder of a sect. What he retained of fanaticism was chiefly external, and artificial; but the leading features of his life, accord surprizingly with the legendary character of the text. Had Loyola remained always ignorant, he had been always a bigot; and, judging by the commencement of his life,

* RETROSPECTIVE REVIEW, No. XVII.

would have died as useless and as burdensome to society as the son of the senator Eufemian.

Note 13. Page 80.

"What I expended, I have; what I gave away, I have."

From hence, in all probability, Robert Byrkes derived the quaint epitaph, which is to be found, according to Gough, in Doncaster church, "*new cut*" upon his tomb in Roman capitals.

"Howe : Howe : who is heare :
I, Robin of Doncaster, and Margeret my feare 1.
That I spent, that I had:
That I gave, that I have:
That I left, that I lost.
A.D. 1579.
Quod Robertus Byrkes,
who in this worlde
did reygne thre
score yeares and seaven,
and yet lived not one."

Note 14. Page 81.

The story seems here to be defective; "what I expended, I have: what I gave away, I have," re-

1 Wife—properly companion, comrade.

ceives no explanation. It may be filled up thus: "What I expended, I have," that is, having expended my property with judgment, I have received various benefits which remain to me in my posterity. "What I gave away, I have," that is, my donations have procured for me the thanks of the poor, and the blessing of heaven.

Note 15. Page 86.

"*Must and vinegar.*"

Must, is new wine. "Vinum igitur *mustum*, quomodo Cato loquitur, idem est, quod *novum*, sive οινος μοσχιδιος. Nonius: *Mustum*, non solum vinum, verùm novellum quicquid est, rectè dicitur."

Vinegar, Lat. acetum. "Optimum, et laudatissimum acetum a Romanis habebatur Ægyptum, quod acrimoniam quidem habebat multam, sed mixtam tamen dulcedine aliqua, quæ asperitatem tollerit, nec horrorem gustandi injiceret." *Facciol.* The vinegar spoken of in the text, was probably sweetened.

Note 16. Page 90.

There are several popular stories not unlike the

present; but they will probably occur to the memory of most readers.

Note 17. Page 92.

There is a curious defence of transubstantiation in this moral; and we may admire its ingenuity while we reprobate the absurd doctrine it is designed to advocate.

"You ask," says the writer of the Gest, "by what means bread may be converted into the real body of Christ. Observe how the mother nourishes her child. If she hunger, and want milk, the infant, deprived of its proper sustenance, languishes and dies. But if, in her greatest extremity, she drink but the lees of wine, those lees, taken by the mouth, become changed into blood, and supply milk and nutriment to the child. If nature, then, exert so much power over the woman, how much more shall the virtue of the sacramental rite, operating by the mouth of the priest, (that is, by the words of Christ proceeding from his mouth), convert bread into flesh, and wine into blood."

Note 17*. Page 93.

"*The widow of a Castellan.*"

The Castellan was a military guardian of a castle; and of the same dignity as the viscount. See Ducange.

Note 18. Page 96.

"This story is told in Caxton's Golden Legende †, and in the Metrical Lives of the Saints. Hence Julian, or Saint Julian, was called *hospitator*, or the *gode herberjour*; and the Pater Noster became famous, which he used to say for the souls of his father and mother whom he had thus unfortunately killed. The peculiar excellencies of this prayer are displayed by Boccace. Chaucer, speak-

* This notation is an error of the Press.

† "Fol. 90. ed. 1493."—*Warton.* There were a great many Saints of this name. "Of this Saynt Julyen some saye this is he that pylgryms and wayfarying men call and requyre for good herborowe, because our Lorde was lodged in his hous. But it seemeth better that it is he yt slewe his fader and moder ignorantly, of whome the hystory is hereafter." Cax. *Golden Leg.* fol. 85. ed. 1527.

ing of the hospitable disposition of his Frankelein, says—

"Saint Julian he was in his own countre [1].

"This history is, like the last, related by our compilers in the words of Julian's Legend, as it stands in Jacobus de Voragine. Bollandus has inserted Antoninus's account of this saint, which appears also to be literally the same. It is told, yet not exactly in the same words, by Vincent of Beauvais."—Warton.

The passage in Boccacio, above alluded to, is as follows:

"Falling from one discourse to another, they began to talk of such prayers as men (in journey) use to salute God with all: and one of the thieves (they being three in number) spake thus to Rinaldo. Sir, let it be no offence that I desire to know, what prayer you most use when you travel on the way? Whereto Rinaldo replied in this manner. To tell you true, sir, I am a man gross enough in such divine matters, as meddling more with merchandize, than I do with books. Nevertheless, at all times, when I am thus in journey, in the morning before I depart my chamber, I say a *Pater Noster* and an

1 Prol. v. 342.

Ave Maria for the souls of the father and mother of St. Julian; and after that, I pray God and St. Julian to send me a good lodging at night. And let me tell you, sir, that very oftentimes heretofore, I have met with many great dangers upon the way, from all which I escaped, and evermore (when night drew on) I came to an exceeding good lodging. Which makes me believe that Saint Julian (in honour of whom I speak it) hath begged of God such great grace for me: and methinks, that if any day I should fail of this prayer in the morning, I cannot travel securely, nor come to a good lodging. No doubt then, sir, (quoth the other) but you have said that prayer this morning? I would be sorry else; said Rinaldo, such an especial matter is not to be neglected." *First Day, Novel II.* 1684.

Note 19. Page 99.

This story is evidently built upon a confused tradition of Cæsar and Pompey. " It was impossible," says Warton, " that the Roman History could pass through the dark ages without being infected with many romantic corruptions. Indeed, the Roman was almost the only ancient history which the

readers of those ages knew: and what related even to pagan Rome, the parent of the more modern papal metropolis of Christianity, was regarded with a superstitious veneration, and often magnified with miraculous additions." *Diss. on the Gest. Rom.*

NOTE 20. Page 104.

" This story is told by Caxton in the GOLDEN LEGENDE, under the life of Pelagian the pope, entitled, *Here foloweth the lyf of Saynt Pelagyen the pope, with many other hystoryes and gestys of the Lombardes, and of Machomete, with other cronycles.* The GESTA LONGOBARDORUM are fertile in legendary matter, and furnished Jacobus de Voragine, Caxton's original, with many marvellous histories. Caxton, from the *gestis of the Lombardis,* gives a wonderful account of a pestilence in Italy, under the reign of king Gilbert."—WARTON. The Golden Legende enters somewhat into the life of the emperor Henry after he came to the throne. Amongst other matters, he " put out of his countree all the juglers and gave to poor people all y[t] was wont to be giuen to mynstrelles."—Fol. ccclxii. Whence it would appear that *jugglers* and *minstrels* were the same.

Note 21. Page 105.

It is not worth while to investigate how much of this story is recorded by Justin.

Note 22. Page 110.

" *Covered it with* theriaque."

Theriaque is an *antidote.* " Tyriacum antidotum, pro *theriacum*, quod vulgo *theriaque* dicimus."—Ducange. " Certaine trochisks [1] there be made of a viper, called by the Greeks *theriaci:* for which purpose they cut away at both ends as toward the head as the taile, the breadth of foure fingers, they rip her bellie also, and take out the garbage within: but especially they rid away the blew string or veine that sticketh close to the ridge-bone. Which done, the rest of the bodie they seeth in a pan with water and dill seed, until such time as all the flesh is gone from the chine: which being taken away, and all the prickie bones thereto belonging, the flesh remaining they incorporate with fine flower, and reduce into troches, which being dried in the shade, are re-

1 A trochisk [Latin, Trociscus] is a kind of medicinal pill or pastille.

served for diverse uses, and enter into many soveraigne antidots and confections. But here it is to bee noted, that although these troches bee called theriaci[1], yet are they made of *viper's* flesh onely. Some there be, who after a viper is cleansed, as is above said, take out the fat, and seeth it with a sextar of oile untill the one halfe bee consumed: which serveth to drive away all venomous beasts, if three drops of this ointment be put into oile, and therewith the bodie be anointed all over."—*Pliny's Nat. Hist.* b. 29. c. iv. trans. by Philemon Holland. Ed. 1601.

Note 23. Page 112.

This figment is clearly eastern. There is a similar story in the veritable "Voyages and Travels of Sir John Mandevile."

"There was a man that was called Catolonapes, he was ful rich, and had a fair castle on a hill, and strong, and he made a wal all about ye hill right strong and fayre, within he had a fair gardeine wherin were many trees bearing all maner of fruits yt he might fynd, and he had planted therin al maner of herbs of good smel and that bare flowers, and

1 Derived from θηρ or θηριον, a wild beast.

ther wer many faire wels, and by them wer made many hals and chambers wel dight w^{t} gold and asure, and he had made there dyverse stories of beastes and birds y^{t} song and turned by engin and orbage as they had been quick, and he had in his gardeine al thing that might be to man solace and comfort, he had also in that gardeine maydens within ye age of xv yeare, the fairest y^{t} he myght find, and men children of the same age, and they were clothed with cloth of gold, and he said that they were aungels, and he caused to be made certain hils and enclosed them about w^{t} precious stones of jasper and christal, and set in gold and pearls, and other maner of stones, and he had made a condute[1] under ye earth, so that whan he wold ye wals ran sometime with milke, sometime with wine, sometime with honey, and this place is called Paradise, and when any yong bachelor of the countrey, knight or sqyer, cometh to him for solace and disport, he ledeth them into his paradise, and sheweth them these things as the songs of birds, and his damosels, and wels; and he did strike diuerse instruments of musyke, in a high tower that might be heard, and sayd they were aungels of god, and that place was paradise, that god hath graunted to those that be-

1 Conduit.

leued, when he sayd thus: *Dabo vobis terram fluentem lacte et melle;* that is to say, I shall give you land flowing with mylk and hony. And than this rych man dyd these men drinke a maner of drinke, of which they were dronken, and he sayd to them, if they wold dye for his sake, when they were dead, they shold come to his paradise, and they should be of the age of those maydens, and shold dwell alway with them, and he shold put them in a fayrer paradise where they should se god in joy, and in his maiesty: and then they graunted to do that he wold, and he bade them go and sleay such a lord, or a man of the countrey that he was wroth with, and that they shold haue no dread of no man. And if they were slaine themselfe for his sake, he sholde put them in his paradise when they were dead. And so went these bachelors to sleay great lords of the countrey, and were slain themselfe in hope to have that paradise, and thus he was avenged of his enemies thro his desert, and when rich men of the countrey perceived this cautell and malice, and the will of this Cotolonapes, they gathered them together and assayled the castel and slew hym and destroyed all his goods and his faire places and riches that were in his paradise; and the place of the walls is there yet, and some other things, but the riches

are not, and it is not long ago since it was destroyed." Chap. xc.

The latter part of this fable is the story of the Assassins, whose Iman or leader was known by the appellation of the " Old Man of the Mountains."

From Mandeville (or rather from Purchas's " Pilgrim," where similar accounts are met with,) Mr. Southey, in his splendid poem of " Thalaba," has borrowed the idea of Aloadin's enchanted garden. See Book VII.

Note 24. Page 112.

Gay appears to have taken the idea of his xlii fable from the moral of this tale. " Talis ponit scutellam," says the Latin, " et nihil ponit intus : interim fabulatur et trufat et ludificat circumstantes : posteà quœrit quid est ibi : et apparent denarii. Distribuit et dat circumstantibus. Accipiunt gratanter ; et cum clauserint manus, credentes se habere denarium : posteà aperientes manus nihil inveniunt."

[Such a one lays down a dish, but he puts nothing in it. In the mean time he prates, cheats, and mocks the spectators. Presently he enquires what is there? and a number of pennies appear, which he distributes to the standers-by. They receive them grate-

fully; close their hands, and believe that they hold them fast. By and by, they open their hands and find nothing.]

" Trick after trick deludes the train.
He shakes his bag, and shews all fair,
His fingers spread, and nothing there,
Then bids it rain with showers of gold;
And now his ivory eggs are told.
* * * * * *
A purse she to a thief exposed;
At once his ready fingers closed.
He opes his fist, the treasure's fled,
He sees a halter in his stead."

Gay's Fables, ed. 1727.

Note 25. Page 119.

This is the twenty-sixth chapter in Warton's Analysis.

Note 26. Page 124.

The demon-hunter in Boccacio is brought to mind by this story. There the lady's apprehensions " grew so powerful upon her, that to prevent the like heavy doom from falling on her, she studied (and therein bestowed all the night season) how to

change her hatred into kind love, which at length she fully obtained."—*Decameron*, 5th Day, Nov. 8. The catastrophe in the text I have added, as affording a better moral. The same story occurs in the 12th chapter of Alphonsus *de Clericali Disciplina*. It appears in an English garb amongst a collection of Æsop's Fables, published in 1658. Mr. Ellis, or rather Mr. Douce in his Analysis of Alphonsus (see Ancient Metrical Romances) has not noticed this translation.

NOTE 27. Page 128.

" *Licence was given, upon that day of triumph, to utter the most galling reproaches, and the most cutting sarcasms.*"

Privileges of this kind were permitted to the Roman slaves, on the celebration of their Saturnalia. In the seventh satire of the second book, Horace gives us an example.

" Age, libertate Decembri,
(Quando ita majores voluerunt) utere: narra."

Davus spares not his master; and in all probability, many a long treasured grudge would, on these occasions, be vented in the bitterest sarcasms.

Note 28. Page 131.

Seneca's observations are singular: "Illud æquè inter annotanda ponas licet, quòd et hominum, et cœterorum animalium quæ icta sunt, caput spectat ad exitum fulminis: quòd omnium percussarum arborum contra fulmina hastulæ surgunt. Quid, quòd malorum serpentium, et aliorum animalium, quibus mortifera vis inest, cum fulmine icta sunt, venenum omne consumitur? Unde, inquit, scis? *In venenatis corporibus vermis non nascitur. Fulmine ictâ, intra paucos dies verminant.*"—Nat. Quæst. lib. ii. 31.

Note 29. Page 133.

This curious anecdote is recorded by Cicero, in his second book, "De Oratore," from whom, probably, Valerius Maximus copied it, if it be in his work. I cannot find it.

"Salsa sunt etiam, quæ habent suspicionem ridiculi absconditam; quo in genere est illud Siculi, cum familiaris quidam quereretur, quod diceret, uxorem suam suspendisse se de ficu. *Amabo te,* inquit, *da mihi ex istâ arbore, quos seram, surculos.*"—Lib. ii. 278.

NOTE 30. Page 134.

" This, I think, is from the SECRETA SECRETORUM. Aristotle, for two reasons, was a popular character in the dark ages. He was the father of their philosophy; and had been the preceptor of Alexander the Great, one of the principal heroes of romance. Nor was Aristotle himself without his romantic history; in which he falls in love with a queen of Greece, who quickly confutes his subtlest syllogisms."—WARTON.

NOTE 31. Page 142.

This fable of the partridge is popular; but it seems more applicable to the *lapwing*.

NOTE 32. Page 142.

Here is a remarkable coincidence or plagiarism. Pope has given a complete and literal version of the passage in this moral.

" Ecce quomodo mundus suis servitoribus reddit mercedem."

" *See how the world its veterans rewards!*"

Moral Essays. On the Character of Women.

Note 33. Page 142.

" *Solinus.*"

Solinus wrote " De Mirabilibus Mundi." He was a Latin grammarian; but the period in which he flourished is doubtful. Moreri says, his work was entitled Polyhistor, " qui est un recueil des choses les plus mémorables qu'on voit en divers païs."

Note 34. Page 143.

This story does not appear in Pliny.

Note 35. Page 144.

" *Serpent called* Perna."

There is no such monster in Pliny. He uses the word for a scion or graft, book 17. c. x. and it also signifies a kind of shell-fish, according to Basil. Faber.

Note 36. Page 144.

" *Achates.*"

Achates is the Latin name for agate. " Found it was first in Sicilie, near unto a river called likewise Achates; but afterwards in many other places."

" People are persuaded that it availeth much against the sting of venomous spiders and scorpions: which propertie I could very well believe to be in the Sicilian agaths, for that so soone as scorpions come within the aire, and breath of the said province of Sicilie, as venomous as they bee otherwise, they die thereupon." " In Persia, they are persuaded, that a perfume of agathes turneth away tempests and all extraordinarie impressions of the aire, as also staieth the violent streame and rage of rivers. But to know which be proper for this purpose, they use to cast them into a cauldron of seething water: for if they coole the same, it is an argument that they bee right."—*Pliny*, *Nat. Hist.* xxxvii. 10.

Note 37. Page 146.

" *The emperor Julius.*"

" We must not forget that there was the romance of Julius Cæsar. And I believe Antony and Cleopatra were more known characters in the dark ages, than is commonly supposed. Shakspeare is thought to have formed his play on this story from North's translation of Amyot's unauthentic French Plutarch, published at London in 1579."

From such sources, in all probability, the monks

derived the little they knew of the GESTA ROMANORUM.

NOTE 38. Page 148.

Macrobius, I believe, furnishes no relation resembling the present: nor is it likely, perhaps.

NOTE 39. Page 150.

" *Cosdras.*"

By *Cosdras*, is meant CODRUS, the last king of Athens. See Justin ii. ch. 6 and 7.

NOTE 40. Page 152.

There is no foundation in Valerius Maximus for this story.

NOTE 41. Page 154.

" *Marcus Aurelius.*"

MARCUS CURTIUS was the name of the youth who devoted himself, according to Roman History. The condition upon which the sacrifice was to be performed, is purely monastic.

NOTE 42. Page 156.

" *Obtained the surname of* BACCHUS."

The orgies of Tiberius might qualify him for this title; but it does not appear that it was ever conferred. Seneca said pleasantly of this emperor, that " he never was drunk but once; and that once was all his life."

NOTE 43. Page 157.

" This piece of history, which appears also in Cornelius Agrippa DE VANITATE SCIENTIARUM, is taken from Pliny, or rather from his transcriber Isidore [1]. Pliny, in relating this story, says, that the temperature of glass, so as to render it flexible, was discovered under the reign of Tiberius.

" In the same chapter Pliny observes, that glass is susceptible of all colours. ' Fit et album, et murrhenum, aut hyacinthos sapphirosque imitatum, et omnibus aliis coloribus. Nec est alia nunc materia sequacior, aut etiam *picturæ accommodatior*. Maximus tamen honor in candido [2].' But the Romans, as the last sentence partly proves, probably never

1 Isidore was a favourite repertory of the middle ages.

2 Pliny Nat. Hist. xxxvi 26.

used any coloured glass for windows. The first notice of windows of a church made of coloured glass, occurs in Chronicles quoted by Muratori. In the year 802, a pope built a church at Rome, and 'fenestras ex vitro diversis coloribus conclusit atque decoravit.' And in 856 he produces 'fenestra vero vitreis coloribus,' &c. This, however, was a sort of Mosaic in glass. To express figures in glass, or what we now call the art of painting in glass, was a very different work: and, I believe, I can shew it was brought from Constantinople to Rome before the tenth century, with other ornamental arts. Guiccardini, who wrote about 1560, in his *Descrittione de tutti Paesi Bassi*, ascribes the invention of baking colours in glass for church-windows to the Netherlanders; but he does not mention the period, and I think he must be mistaken. It is certain that this art owed much to the laborious and mechanical genius of the Germans; and, in particular, their deep researches and experiments in chemistry, which they cultivated in the dark ages with the most indefatigable assiduity, must have greatly assisted its operations. I could give very early anecdotes of this art in England."—WARTON.

NOTE 44. Page 159.

This tale, containing an appeal to natural affection, in all probability takes its rise from the judgment of Solomon. But whether or not, the analogy is sufficiently striking to betray its eastern derivation.

NOTE 45. Page 162.

We have here a curious instance of the anomalous introduction of saints. The three Magi one would have thought not exactly fitted for the Christian Calendar.

NOTE 46. Page 163.

"*Pyx.*"

Pyx, is properly a *box.* "πυξις, ἀπό τȣ πυξος quod nomen buxum significat, unde et pyxidem *buxulum* Itali vocant."—FAB. THES. The Roman Catholics put the Host into this kind of box.

NOTE 47. Page 164.

"*And as the dew moistens the herbage, and promotes*

a large increase of fertility, so the clemency of a king lifts him above the stars."

The Latin original is as follows: " Sicut ros herbam irrigat ut crescat; sic dulcis clementia regis usque ad sydera provehit et exaltat," which coincides remarkably with a passage in the " *Merchant of Venice.*"

" The quality of mercy is not strained;
It droppeth, as the gentle rain from heaven,
Upon the place beneath."—Act III. Sc. 1.

NOTE 48. Page 166.

" *As* QUIDIUS *has observed.*"

Who *Quidius* was I am unable to say. The sentiment here referred to is Ovid's—

——" Neque enim lex æquior ulla,
Quàm necis artifices arte perire suâ."
De arte Amandi.

But it is very probable that we should read OVIDIUS for QUIDIUS above.

Note 49. Page 167.

" Paulus *the historian of the* Longobardi."

" Paulus, that is, Paulus Diaconus, the *historian of the Longobards* is quoted. He was chancellor of Desiderius, the last king of the Lombards; with whom he was taken captive by Charlemagne. The history here referred to is entitled Gesta Longobardorum *."—Warton.

Note 50. Page 167.

" *The town of* Julius."

Warton calls it " *Foro-Juli*," because the Latin is " *in foro Julii*." In all probability the same place is meant as in the following extract from the old play of " *Promos and Cassandra*." " In the cytie of Julio (sometime under the dominion of Corvinus, king of *Hungarie*, and *Boemia*)" &c. 1578.

1 There are some fine circumstances of distress in Paulus's description of the siege.

Note 51. Page 170.

Zaleucus[1], not Zelongus, was the name of the king who performed this striking act of justice. It is thus told by Valerius Maximus. " Zaleucus, urbe Locrensium à se saluberrimis atque utilissimis legibus munita, cum filius ejus adulterii crimine damnatus, secundum jus ab ipso constitutum, utroque oculo carere deberet, ac tota civitas in honorem patris pœnæ necessitatem adolescentulo remitteret, aliquamdiu repugnavit. Ad ultimum precibus populi evictus, suo prius, deinde filii oculi eruto, usum videndi utrique reliquit. Ita debitum supplicii modum legi reddidit, æquitatis admirabili temperamento, se inter misericordem patrem et justum legislatorem partitus."—Lib. vi. c. 5. Ex. 3.

Note 52. Page 172.

I have met with a similar story in a modern book of fables under the following form.

" One hot day in summer, a boar, covered with wounds, threw himself beneath the shadow of a large tree, where he was grievously tormented by

1 Some copies read Seleucus.

innumerable swarms of flies. A fox, who was passing by, drew near; and good-naturedly offered to drive away the obnoxious insects. 'Let them alone, my friend,' said the boar; 'these flies are glutted, and unable to do me much further injury. But if they are driven off, others will supply their places, and at this rate, I shall not have a drop of blood left in my body.'"

Note 53. Page 173.

The occasion of this noble proceeding is thus detailed. "Captivos ab Annibale interposita pactione nummorum receperat. Qui cum à senatu non præstarentur, misso in Urbem filio, fundum, quem unicum possidebat, vendidit, ejusque pretium Annibali protinus numeravit. Si ad calculos revocetur, parvum, utpote septem jugeribus, et hoc in Pupinia addictis, redactum: si animo erogantis, omni pecunia majus. Se enim patrimonii, quam patriam fidei, inopem esse maluit: eo quidem majore commendatione, quod proni studii certius indicium est supra vires niti, quam viribus ex facili uti. Alter enim quod potest, præstat: alter etiam plus quam potest." *Valerius Maximus*, Lib. iv. c. 8. *Ex*. 1.

The *Fabius* of whom this is told, is Fabius Maximus.

*

Note 54. Page 174.

The anecdote is thus recorded by the historian: "Senectutis ultimæ quædam, Syracusanis omnibus Dionysii tyranni exitum, propter nimiam morum acerbitatem et intolerabilia onera, votis expetentibus, sola quotidie matutino tempore deos, ut incolumis ac sibi superstes esset, orabat. Quod ubi is cognovit, non debitam sibi admiratus benevolentiam, arcessit eam, et *quid ita hoc, aut quo suo merito faceret,* interrogavit. Tum illa, *certa est,* inquit, *ratio propositi mei. puella enim, cum gravem tyrannum haberemus, carere eo cupiebam: quo interfecto, aliquanto tetrior arcem occupavit. Ejus quoque finiri dominationem magni æstimabam: tertium te superioribus importuniorem habere cœpimus rectorem. Itaque timens, ne, si tu fueris absumptus, deterior in locum tuum succedat, caput meam pro tua salute devoveo.* Tam facetam audaciam Dionysius punire erubuit."

Val. Max. Lib. vi. c. 2. Ex. 2.

This must remind the reader of Æsop's fable of the frogs who desired a king. *Which* is the original? It occurs among some translated *Dutch* fables, by De Witt, under the title of "*A woman praying for the long Life of Dionysius the Tyrant.*" See the Appendix.

Note 55. Page 176.

"I wonder there are not more romances extant on the lives of the Roman Emperors in Germany; many of whom, to say no more, were famous in the crusades. There is a romance in old German rhyme, called Teuerdank, on Maximilian the first, written by Melchior Pfinzing, his chaplain. Printed at Nuremberg in 1517."—Warton.

Note 56. Page 188.

"Caxton has the history of Albrone, a king of the Lombards, who having conquered another king, 'lade awaye wyth hym Rosamounde his wyf in captyvyte, but after he took hyr to hys wyfe, and he dyde make a cuppe of the skulle of that kynge, and closed in fyne golde and syluer, and dranke out of it[1].'" *Gold. Leg.* f. ccclxxxvii. a. edit. 1493. "This, by the way, is the old Italian tragedy of Messer Giovanni Rucellai, planned on the model of the antients, and acted in the Rucellai Gardens, at Florence, before Leo the Tenth and his Court in the

1 This is an historical fact, and may be found in Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire." Vol. VIII. page 129. 1811.

year 1516. Davenant has also a tragedy on the same subject, called ALBOVINE, *king of the Lombards, his Tragedy.*

" A most sanguinary scene in Shakspeare's TITUS ANDRONICUS, an incident in Dryden's, or Boccace's TANCRED and SIGISMONDA, and the catastrophe of the beautiful metrical romance of the LADY of FAGUEL, are founded on the same horrid ideas of inhuman retaliation and savage revenge: but in the last two pieces, the circumstances are so ingeniously imagined, as to lose a considerable degree of their atrocity, and to be productive of the most pathetic and interesting situations."—WARTON.

NOTE 57. Page 189.

" *He called* VIRGIL."

The Latin original says, *Magistrum Virgilium,* Master Virgil, signifying one skilful in the occult sciences.

" This story is in the old black-lettered history of the Necromancer Virgil, in Mr. Garrick's collection.

" Vincent of Beauvais relates many wonderful things, *mirabiliter actitata,* done by the poet Virgil, whom he represents as a magician. Among others, he says, that Virgil fabricated those brazen statues

at Rome, called *Salvacio Romæ*, which were the gods of the provinces conquered by the Romans. Every one of these statues held in its hand a bell, framed by magic; and when any province was meditating a revolt, the statue or idol of that country struck his bell."—WARTON.

The following ingenious hypothesis may explain the cause of the necromancy so universally attributed to Virgil during the dark ages.

"*Maium* illum, avum Virgilii, exemplaria vitæ omnia *Magum* vocant. At cùm ejus filia, Virgilii mater, juxta omnes *Maia* dicta sit: omninò Maiæ pater fuit Maius, non Magus: indeque ortum existimo, ut Virgilius *magicis artibus imbutus fuisse creditus sit* ab Elinando monacho aliisque sequioris seculi scriptoribus: quòd et Eclogâ septimâ magica quædam sacra descripsisset, et peritus esset multarum artium, et præcipuè avum habuisse MAGUM diceretur."—*Hist. P. Virg. Mar. à Car. Ruæo.*

NOTE 57 [1]. Page 203.

"*Broke her* JESSES."

Jesses are the leather straps with which a hawk was confined. It is not, however, in the Latin.

1 Inaccurate notation.

Note 58. Page 208.

" On this there is an ancient French Moralité, entitled, ' *L'Orgueil et Presomption de l'Empereur* Jovinian.' This is also the story of Robert king of Sicily, an old English poem or romance."—Warton.

An entertaining abstract of this old romance is here added, from Mr. Ellis's *Specimens*.

" ROBERT OF CYSILLE.

" Robert king of Sicily, brother to Pope Urban and to Valemond emperor of Germany, was among the most powerful and valorous princes of Europe; but his arrogance was still more conspicuous than his power or his valour. Constantly occupied by the survey of his present greatness, or by projects for its future extension, he considered the performance of his religious duties as insufferably tedious; and never paid his adorations to the Supreme Being without evident reluctance and disgust. His guilt was great; and his punishment was speedy and exemplary.

" Once upon a time, being present during vespers on the eve of St. John, his attention was excited by the following passage in the Magnificat; ' deposuit potentes de sede, et exaltavit humiles.' He inquired of a *clerk* the meaning of these words ; and, having heard the explanation, replied that such expressions were very foolish, since he, being the very flower of chivalry, was too mighty to be thrown down from his seat, and had no apprehension of seeing others exalted at his expense. The clerk did not presume to attempt any remonstrance; the service continued ; Robert thought it longer and more tedious than ever ; and at last fell fast asleep.

" His slumber was not interrupted, nor indeed noticed by any of the congregation, because an angel having in the mean time assumed his features, together with the royal robes, had been attended by the usual officers to the palace, where supper was immediately served. Robert, however, awaked at the close of day; was much astonished by the darkness of the church, and not less so by the solitude which surrounded him. He began to call loudly for his attendants, and at length attracted the notice of the sexton, who, conceiving him to be a thief secreted in the church for the purpose of stealing the sacred ornaments, approached the door with

some precaution, and transmitted his suspicions through the key-hole. Robert indignantly repelled this accusation, affirming that he was the king; upon which the sexton, persuaded that he had lost his senses, and not at all desirous of having a madman under his care, opened the door, and was glad to see the supposed maniac run with all speed to the palace. But the palace gates were shut; and Robert, whose temper was never very enduring, and was now exasperated by rage and hunger, vainly attempted by threats of imprisonment, and even of death, to subdue the contumacy of the porter. While the metamorphosed monarch was venting his rage at the gate, this officer hastened to the hall, and, falling on his knees, requested his sovereign's orders concerning a madman, who loudly asserted his right to the throne. The angel directed that he should be immediately admitted; and Robert at length appeared, covered with mud, in consequence of an affray in which he had flattened the porter's nose, and had been himself rolled in a puddle by the porter's assistants.

"Without paying the least attention to the accidental circumstances, or the clamours of the wounded man, who loudly demanded justice, he rushed up to the throne; and though a good deal startled at finding not only that, and all the attributes of roy-

alty, but even his complete set of features, in the possession of another, he boldly proceeded to treat the angel as an impostor, threatening him with the vengeance of the pope and of the emperor, who, he thought, could not fail of distinguishing the true from the fictitious sovereign of Sicily.

" 'Thou art my fool!' said the angel;
'Thou shalt be shorn, every deal
'Like a fool, a fool to be;
'For thou hast now no dignity.
'Thine counsellor shall be an ape;
'And o[1] clothing you shall be shape.—
'He shall ben thine own fere:
'Some wit of him thou might lere,
'Hounds, how so it befalle,
'Shall eat with thee in the hall.
'Thou shalt eaten on the ground;
'Thy 'sayer shall ben an hound,
'To assay thy meat before thee;
'For thou hast lore thy dignity.'

He cleped a barber him before,
That, as a fool, he should be shore,
All around like a frere,
An *hande-brede*[2] above the ear;

1 One; *i. e. in one.*

2 " A hand's breadth.

And on his crown maken a cross[1].
He gan cry and make noise ;
And said they should all abye,
That did him swich villainy, &c.

" Thus was Robert reduced to the lowest state of human degradation ; an object of contempt and derision to those whom he had been accustomed to despise ; often suffering from hunger and thirst ; and seeing his sufferings inspire no more compassion than those of the animals with whom he shared his precarious and disgusting repast. Yet his pride and petulance were not subdued. To the frequent inquiries of the angel, whether he still thought himself a king, he continued to answer by haughty denunciations of vengeance, and was incensed almost to madness, when this reply excited, as it constantly did, a general burst of laughter.

" In the mean time, Robert's dominions were admirably governed by his angelic substitute. The country, always fruitful, became a paragon of fertility ; abuses were checked by a severe administration of equal justice ; and, for a time, all evil pro-

" 1 The custom of shaving fools, so as to give them in some measure the appearance of friars, is frequently noticed in our oldest romances."

pensities seemed to be eradicated from the hearts of the happy Sicilians—

> " Every man loved well other;
> Better love was never with brother.
> In his time was never no strife
> Between man and his wife :
> Then was this a joyful thing
> In land to have swich a king.

" At the end of about three years arrived a solemn embassy from Sir Valemond the emperor, requesting that Robert would join him on holy Thursday, at Rome, whither he proposed to go on a visit to his brother Urban. The angel welcomed the ambassadors ; bestowed on them garments lined with ermine and embroidered with jewels, so exquisitely wrought as to excite universal astonishment ; and departed in their company to Rome.—

> " The fool Robert also went,
> Clothed in loathly garnement,
> With fox-tails riven all about :
> Men might him knowen in the rout.
> An ape rode of[1] his clothing ;
> So foul rode never king.

[1] To.

" These strange figures, contrasted with the unparalleled magnificence of the angel and his attendants, produced infinite merriment among the spectators, whose shouts of admiration were enlivened by frequent peals of laughter.

" Robert witnessed, in sullen silence, the demonstrations of affectionate regard with which the pope and the emperor welcomed their supposed brother ; but, at length, rushing forward, bitterly reproached them for thus joining in an unnatural conspiracy with the usurper of his throne. This violent sally, however, was received by his brothers, and by the whole papal court, as an undoubted proof of his madness ; and he now learnt for the first time the real extent of his misfortune. His stubbornness and pride gave way, and were succeeded by sentiments of remorse and penitence.

" We have already seen, that he was not very profoundly versed in scripture history, but he now fortunately recollected two examples which he considered as nearly similar to his own ; those of Nebuchadnessar and Holofernes. Recalling to his mind their greatness and degradation, he observed that God alone had bestowed on them that power which he afterwards annihilated.—

' So hath he mine, for my gult ;
' Now am I full lowe pult ;

‘ And that is right that I so be :
‘ Lord, on thy fool have thou pitè!

‘ That error hath made me to smart
‘ That I had in my heart;
‘ Lord, I ’leved not on thee:
‘ Lord, on thy fool have thou pitè.

‘ Holy writ I had in despite;
‘ Therefore ’reaved is my right;
‘ Therefore is right a fool that I be :
‘ Lord, on thy fool have thou pitè,’ &c.

“ The sincerity of his contrition is evinced, in the original, by a long series of such stanzas, with little variation of thought or expression; but the foregoing specimen will, perhaps, suffice for the satisfaction of the reader.

“ After five weeks spent in Rome, the emperor, and the supposed king of Sicily, returned to their respective dominions, Robert being still accoutred in his fox-tails, and accompanied by his ape, whom he now ceased to consider as his inferior. When returned to the palace, the angel, before the whole court, repeated his usual question; but the penitent, far from persevering in his former insolence, humbly replied, ‘ that he was indeed a fool, or worse than a fool; but that he had at least acquired

a perfect indifference for all worldly dignities.' The attendants were now ordered to retire: and the angel, being left alone with Robert, informed him that his sins were forgiven; gave him a few salutary admonitions, and added,

> ' I am an angel of renown
> ' Sent to keep thy regioun.
> ' More joy me shall fall
> ' In heaven, among mine feren all,
> ' In an hour of a day,
> ' Than here, I thee say,
> ' In an hundred thousand year;
> ' Though all the world, far and near,
> ' Were mine at my liking:
> ' I am an angel; thou art king!'

" With these words he disappeared; and Robert, returning to the hall, received, not without some surprise and confusion, the usual salutations of the courtiers.

" From this period he continued, during three years, to reign with so much justice and wisdom that his subjects had no cause to regret the change of their sovereign; after which, being warned by the angel of his approaching dissolution, he dictated to his secretaries a full account of his former perverseness, and of its strange punishment; and,

having sealed it with the royal signet, ordered it to be sent, for the edification of his brothers, to Rome and Vienna. Both received, with due respect, the important lesson : the emperor often recollected with tenderness and compassion the degraded situation of the valiant Robert ; and the pope, besides availing himself of the story in a number of sermons addressed to the faithful, caused it to be carefully preserved in the archives of the Vatican, as a constant warning against pride, and an incitement to the performance of our religious duties."

The story of " The King of Thibet and the Princess of the Naimans," in the Persian and Turkish Tales, presents an incident somewhat similar. But the assumption of another's likeness, is a common eastern figment.

Note 59. Page 212.

" This is evidently a Gothic innovation of the classical tale of Atalanta. But it is not impossible, that an oriental apologue might have given rise to the Grecian fable."—Warton.

The story of Atalanta, I consider the origin of many subsequent fables. Amongst these, the " Hare and the Tortoise" may be noticed.

Note 60. Page 214.

The introduction of Alexander the Great, Socrates, and a Roman emperor, is a strange jumble of times and persons.

Note 61. Page 223.

"*Beware that you lose not the* THREAD."

A fine moral, which might be oftener remembered with advantage. The Gospel is to the Christian, what the ball of thread was to the knight: pity that it should so frequently be lost!

Note 62. Page 224.

"Here seems to be an allusion to Medea's history."—Warton. It is surely more analogous to the story of the Minotaur, and the clue furnished by Ariadne to her lover. Warton should have explained the resemblance he has fancied.

Note 63. Page 234.

"*My friend, let us go through the world as other knights are wont to do.*"

"Sicut cæteri milites." Here we discover those features of chivalry, so admirably ridiculed by Cer-

vantes. But, in times of oppression, when every one followed

> "the simple plan,
> That he may take who has the power,
> And he may keep who can,"

the wandering hero, ever ready to risk his life in defence of the injured, was governed by a noble and useful institution.

Note 64. Page 236.

"*If the end be well, all is well.*"

"Si finis bonus est, totum bonum erit." This gives us the origin, probably, of the proverb, "*All's well that ends well.*" "Finis coronat opus," is of a similar character.

Note 65. Page 239.

The interpretation of the language of birds, is clearly an oriental fiction; several instances of which are furnished by the Arabian Tales. It has since been made the vehicle of many instructive fables. See Spectator, Vol. VII. No. 512. which is copied from the "*Story of the two Owls,*" in the Turkish Tales.

Note 66. Page 250.

This fable has crept in our story-books.

Note 67. Page 273.

We have here a new version of an Æsopian fable.

Note 68. Page 280.

" This is the fable of Parnell's Hermit, which that elegant and original writer has heightened with many masterly touches of poetical colouring, and a happier arrangement of circumstances. Among other proofs which might be mentioned of Parnell's genius and address in treating this subject, by reserving the discovery of the angel to a critical period at the close of the fable, he has found means to introduce a beautiful description, and an interesting surprise."—Warton.

That the reader may compare the two stories the more readily, it is inserted here.

" THE HERMIT.

" Far in a wild, unknown to public view,
From youth to age a reverend hermit grew,

The moss his bed, the cave his humble cell,
His food the fruits, his drink the crystal well:
Remote from men, with God he pass'd his days,
Pray'r all his business, all his pleasure praise.
"A life so sacred, such serene repose,
Seem'd heaven itself, till one suggestion rose;
That vice should triumph, virtue vice obey,—
This sprung some doubt of Providence's sway:
His hopes no more a certain prospect boast,
And all the tenour of his soul was lost:
So when a smooth expanse receives imprest
Calm nature's image on its wat'ry breast,
Down bend the banks, the trees depending grow,
And skies beneath with answering colours glow:
But if a stone the gentle sea divide,
Swift ruffling circles curl on every side,
And glimmering fragments of a broken sun,
Banks, trees, and skies in thick disorder run.
"To clear this doubt, to know the world by sight,
To find if books, or swains, report it right,
(For yet by swains alone the world he knew,
Whose feet came wand'ring o'er the nightly dew)
He quits his cell; the pilgrim's staff he bore,
And fix'd the scallop in his hat before;
Then with the sun a rising journey went,
Sedate to think, and watching each event.

" The morn was wasted in the pathless grass,
And long and lonesome was the wild to pass;
But when the southern sun had warm'd the day,
A youth came posting o'er the crossing way!
His raiment decent, his complexion fair,
And soft in graceful ringlets wav'd his hair.
Then near approaching, Father, hail! he cried,
And hail, my son, the rev'rend sire replied;
Words follow'd words, from question answer flow'd,
And talk of various kind deceiv'd the road,
'Till each with other pleas'd, and loth to part,
While in their age they differ, join in heart.
Thus stands an aged elm in ivy bound,
Thus youthful ivy clasps an elm around.

" Now sunk the sun; the closing hour of day,
Came onward, mantled o'er with sober grey:
Nature in silence bid the world repose;
When near the road a stately palace rose;
There by the moon thro' ranks of trees they pass,
Whose verdure crown'd their sloping sides with grass.
It chanc'd the noble master of the dome,
Still made his house the wand'ring stranger's home:
Yet still the kindness, from a thirst of praise,
Prov'd the vain flourish of expensive ease.
The pair arrive; the liv'ry'd servants wait;
Their lord receives them at the pompous gate.

The table groans with costly piles of food,
And all is more than hospitably good.
Then led to rest, the day's long toil they drown,
Deep sunk in sleep, and silk, and heaps of down.
"At length, 'tis morn, and at the dawn of day,
Along the wide canals the zephyrs play:
Fresh o'er the gay parterres the breezes creep,
And shake the neighbouring wood to banish sleep.
Up rise the guests, obedient to the call;
An early banquet deck'd the splendid hall;
Rich luscious wine a golden goblet grac'd,
Which the kind master forc'd his guests to taste.
Then pleas'd and thankful, from the porch they go;
And, but the landlord, none had cause for woe;
His cup was vanish'd; for in secret guise,
The younger guest purloin'd the glittering prize.
"As one who spies a serpent in his way,
Glist'ning and basking in the sunny ray,
Disorder'd stops to shun the danger near,
Then walks with faintness on, and looks with fear:
So seem'd the sire; when, far upon the road,
The shining spoil his wily partner shew'd:
He stopp'd with silence, walk'd with trembling heart,
And much he wish'd, but durst not ask, to part;
Murmuring he lifts his eyes, and thinks it hard,
That generous actions meet a base reward.

"While thus they pass, the sun his glory shrouds,
The changing skies hang out their sable clouds;
A sound in air presag'd approaching rain,
And beasts to covert scud across the plain.
Warn'd by the signs, the wand'ring pair retreat,
To seek for shelter at a neighb'ring seat.
'Twas built with turrets on a rising ground,
And strong, and large, and unimprov'd around;
Its owner's temper, tim'rous and severe,
Unkind and griping, caus'd a desert there.

"As near the miser's heavy doors they drew,
Fierce rising gusts with sudden fury blew;
The nimble light'ning mix'd with show'rs began,
And o'er their heads loud rolling thunders ran.
Here long they knock, but knock or call in vain,
Driv'n by the wind, and batter'd by the rain.
At length some pity warm'd the master's breast,
('Twas then his threshold first receiv'd a guest.)
Slow creaking turns the door with jealous care,
And half he welcomes in the shiv'ring pair;
One frugal faggot lights the naked walls,
And nature's fervour thro' their limbs recalls:
Bread of the coarsest sort, with eager [1] wine,
(Each hardly granted) serv'd them both to dine;
And when the tempest first appear'd to cease,
A ready warning bade them part in peace.

1 Sour.

" With still remark the pond'ring hermit view'd,
In one so rich, a life so poor and rude:
And why should such, within himself he cry'd,
Lock the lost wealth a thousand want beside?
But what new marks of wonder soon took place,
In every settling feature of his face;
When from his vest the young companion bore
That cup the generous landlord own'd before,
And paid profusely with the precious bowl
The stinted kindness of the churlish soul.

" But now the clouds in airy tumult fly;
The sun emerging opes an azure sky;
A fresher green the smelling leaves display,
And, glitt'ring as they tremble, cheer the day;
The weather tempts them from the poor retreat,
And the glad master bolts the wary gate.
While hence they walk, the pilgrim's bosom wrought
With all the travel of uncertain thought;
His partner's acts without their cause appear,
'Twas there a vice and seem'd a madness here;
Detesting that, and pitying this, he goes,
Lost and confounded with the various shows.

" Now night's dim shades again involve the sky,
Again the wand'rers want a place to lie;
Again they search, and find a lodging nigh.
The soil improv'd around, the mansion neat,
And neither poorly low, nor idly great:

It seem'd to speak its master's turn of mind,
Content,—and not for praise, but virtue kind.
" Hither the walkers turn with weary feet,
Then bless the mansion, and the master greet:
Their greeting fair, bestow'd with modest guise,
The modest master hears, and thus replies:
" Without a vain, without a grudging heart,
To him, who gives us all, I yield a part;
From him you come, for him accept it here,
A frank and sober, more than costly cheer.
He spoke, and bid the welcome table spread,
Then talk'd of virtue till the time of bed,
When the grave household round his hall repair,
Warn'd by a bell, and close the hours with pray'r.
At length the world, renew'd by calm repose,
Was strong for toil, the dappled morn arose;
Before the pilgrims part, the younger crept
Near the closed cradle, where an infant slept,
And writh'd his neck: the landlord's little pride,
O strange return! grew black, and gasp'd, and died.
Horror of horrors! what! his only son!
How look'd the hermit when the fact was done;
Not hell, tho' hell's black jaws in sunder part,
And breathe blue fire, could more assault his heart.
" Confus'd, and struck with silence at the deed,
He flies, but trembling fails to fly with speed.

His steps the youth pursues; the country lay
Perplex'd with roads, a servant show'd the way:
A river cross'd the path; the passage o'er
Was nice to find; the servant trod before;
Long arms of oak an open bridge supply'd,
And deep the waves beneath the bending branches glide.
The youth, who seem'd to watch a time for sin,
Approach'd the careless guide, and thrust him in:
Plunging he falls, and rising lifts his head,
Then flashing turns, and sinks amongst the dead.
Wild, sparkling rage inflames the father's eyes,
He bursts the bands of fear, and madly cries,
Detested wretch—but scarce his speech began,
When the strange partner seem'd no longer man.
His youthful face grew more serenely sweet;
His robe turn'd white and flow'd upon his feet;
Fair rounds of radiant points invest his hair;
Celestial odours breathe thro' purple air;
And wings, whose colours glitter'd on the day,
Wide at his back their gradual plumes display.
The form etherial bursts upon his sight,
And moves in all the majesty of light.
" Tho' loud at first the pilgrim's passion grew,
Sudden he gaz'd, and wist not what to do;
Surprize in secret chains his words suspends,
And in a calm his settling temper ends.

But silence here the beauteous angel broke,
(The voice of music ravish'd as he spoke.)
"Thy pray'r, thy praise, thy life to vice unknown,
In sweet memorial rise before the throne:
These charms success in our bright region find,
And force an angel down to calm thy mind;
For this commission'd, I forsook the sky:—
Nay cease to kneel—thy fellow-servant I.
"Then know the truth of government divine,
And let these scruples be no longer thine.
The Maker justly claims the world he made,
In this the right of Providence is laid;
Its sacred majesty thro' all depends,
On using second means to work his ends;
'Tis thus, withdrawn in state from human eye,
The Power exerts his attributes on high,
Your actions uses, nor controuls your will,
And bids the doubting sons of men be still.
"What strange events can strike with more surprize,
Than those which lately struck thy wond'ring eyes?
Yet, taught by these, confess the Almighty just,
And, where you can't unriddle, learn to trust!
"The great vain man, who far'd on costly food,
Whose life was too luxurious to be good;
Who made his iv'ry stands with goblets shine,
And forc'd his guests to morning draughts of wine,

Has, with the cup, the graceless custom lost,
And still he welcomes, but with less of cost.
"The mean, suspicious wretch, whose bolted door
Ne'er mov'd in pity to the wand'ring poor;
With him I left the cup, to teach his mind
That heav'n can bless, if mortals will be kind.
Conscious of wanting worth, he views the bowl,
And feels compassion touch his grateful soul.
Thus artists melt the sullen ore of lead,
With heaping coals of fire upon his head;
In the kind warmth the metal learns to glow,
And loose from dross the silver runs below.
"Long had our pious friend in virtue trod,
But now the child half-weaned his heart from God;
(Child of his age) for him he liv'd in pain,
And measur'd back his steps to earth again.
To what excesses had his dotage run?
But God, to save the father, took the son.
To all, but thee, in fits he seem'd to go,
(And 'twas my ministry to deal the blow,)
The poor fond parent, humbled in the dust,
Now owns in tears the punishment was just.
But how had all his fortunes felt a wrack,
Had that false servant sped in safety back;
This night his treasur'd heaps he meant to steal,
And what a fund of charity would fail!

Thus heav'n instructs thy mind: this trial o'er,
Depart in peace, resign and sin no more.

"On sounding pinions here the youth withdrew,
The sage stood wond'ring as the seraph flew.
Thus look'd Elisha, when to mount on high,
His Master took the chariot of the sky;
The fiery pomp ascending left the view;
The prophet gaz'd, and wish'd to follow too.

"The bending hermit here a pray'r begun,
LORD, AS IN HEAV'N, ON EARTH THY WILL BE DONE.
Then, gladly turning, sought his ancient place,
And pass'd a life of piety and peace."

"The same apologue occurs, with some slight additions and variations for the worse, in Howell's LETTERS; who professes to have taken it from the *speculative* Sir Philip Herbert's CONCEPTIONS to his Son, a book which I have never seen. These Letter were published about the year 1650. It is also found in the DIVINE DIALOGUES of Doctor Henry More, who has illustrated its important moral wit. the following fine reflections.

"'The affairs of this world are like a curious, but intricately contrived comedy; and we cannot judge of the tendency of what is past, or acting at present, before the entrance of the last act, which

shall bring in righteousness in triumph: who, though she hath abided many a brunt, and has been very cruelly and despitefully used hitherto in the world, yet at last, according to our desires, we shall see the knight overcome the giant. For what is the reason we are so much pleased with the reading romances and the fictions of the poets, but that here, as Aristotle says, things are set down as they should be; but in the true history hitherto of the world, things are recorded indeed as they are, but it is but a testimony, that they have not been as they should be? Wherefore, in the upshot of all, when we shall see that come to pass, that so mightily pleases us in the reading the most ingenious plays and heroic poems, that long afflicted virtue at last comes to the crown, the mouth of all unbelievers must be for ever stopped. And for my own part, I doubt not but that it will so come to pass in the close of the world. But impatiently to call for vengeance upon every enormity before that time, is rudely to overturn the stage before the entrance into the fifth act, out of ignorance of the plot of the comedy; and to prevent the solemnity of the general judgment by more paltry and particular executions.'

"Parnell seems to have chiefly followed the story as it is told by this Platonic theologist, who had not

less imagination than learning. Pope used to say, that it was originally written in Spanish. This I do not believe: but from the early connection between the Spaniards and Arabians, this assertion tends to confirm the suspicion, that it was an oriental tale[1]."
—Warton.

1 "I must not forget, that it occurs, as told in our Gesta, among a collection of Latin apologues, quoted above, MSS. Harl. 463. fol. 8. a. The rubric is, *De angelo qui duxit Heremitam ad diversa Hospitia.*"—Warton.

END OF VOL. I

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Gesta Romanorum.

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